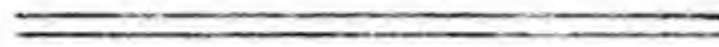


Thakkar Vassonji Madhavji Lectures.



GUJARATI LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE.



LECTURES

Delivered by

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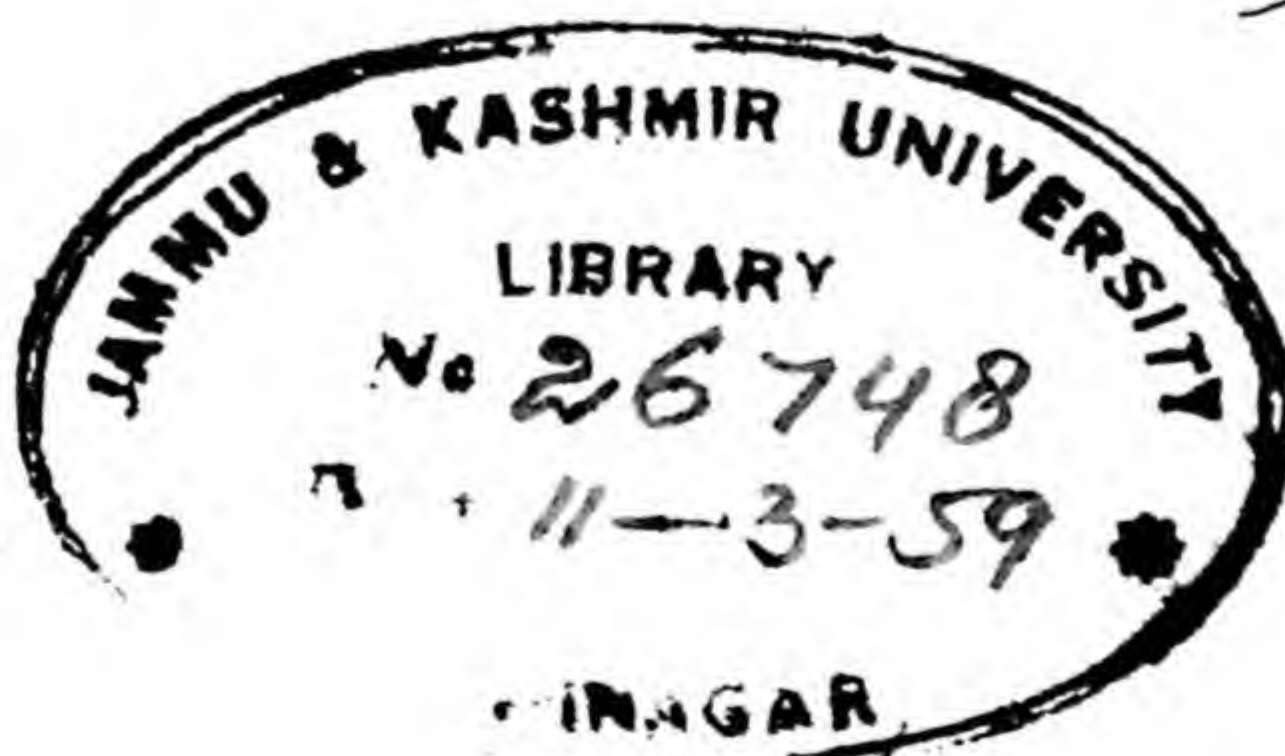
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P R E F A C E

Mr. K. M. Munshi's zealous efforts secured for the University of Bombay the Thakkar VasANJI Madhowji Lectureship in 1928-29 A. D.. The first series of Lectures under this endowment was delivered by me in the beginning of 1930 A. D. at the invitation of the Syndicate. The subject selected by me was Gujarātī Literature. I am thus indebted to the Syndicate for affording me an opportunity to place before the public my views on a subject dear to my heart. I undertook the task under a full sense of the heavy responsibility which was placed upon me. I have endeavoured to discharge it to the best of my ability. I am conscious of the limitations of that ability and of the fact that one can say very little that is new in these days of rapid advance, - literary and intellectual. This statement may be summed up in the single pithy sentence uttered some five centuries ago by the *Adi Kavi* of Gujarātī, Narsinha Mehta, who confessed about himself thus: -

“જ્ઞાવિદ કવિ નહિં, વાત કંઈ નવો નહિં.”

And yet, if I succeed in my endeavour to present old things in a more or less new light, I shall consider myself amply rewarded.

The subject of Gujarātī literature, ancient and modern, is a vast one, which cannot be easily covered a limited number of lectures. I therefore decided

upon the scheme which is apparent in the present lectures: viz. to devote the first two lectures to an inquiry into the relation between language and literature and their functions and the position of Gujarātī literature amongst the literatures of the world; and then to select two representative giants in our literature (ancient literature, I mean), for treatment and appreciation in the three subsequent lectures, applying such critical and historical tests as would present their work in a fresh light. I have thus left to my successors in this work a fairly large field to work in.

One word about the language selected for my lectures. The rules of the endowment gave me the option between English and Gujarātī: and I selected English for several reasons. If I had selected Gujarātī as my linguistic vehicle, it would have been like carrying coals to New Castle, in a sense, and I should have failed to reach the wider audience of Englishmen desirous to acquaint themselves with our literature. It would be absurd to argue that they should learn our language if they wished to appreciate our literature. In fact addressing them in English would serve the purpose of creating their appreciative interest and stimulating their curiosity. This, I maintain, was the best way of popularizing the study of our literature.

Santa Cruz
March 1931.

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N. B. DIVATIA.

CORRIGENDA.

Page.	Line.	incorrect.	Correct.
1	6	સંપૂર્ણ	સંપૂર્ણ
2	16	syntnetic	synthetic
9	5	burst	bursts
12	foot note.	Indian Reformer	Indian Social Reformer
20	27	anticipaies	anticipates
26	13	Pnraṇās	Purāṇās
29	3	Maternal	Material
31	7	નિશ્ચ	નિશ્ચ
35	2	work	works
38	3 (margin)	Drop or	
41	13	yonginī	yoginī
41	28	Cautions	Cautious
44	11	Govindāsa	Govindadāsa
47	2 (margin)	Śāstr'is	Śāstrī's
47	24	ān	nā
51	15	especial	especially
52	Read foot note No. 19 on page 53.		
53	2	add 19 at the end.	
56	20	દાંકિયું રે	દાંજિયું જી
61	17	Valsanta	Vasanta
68	16	દુતી	દૂતી
69	last (f. note)	સહસપદી	સહસ્રપદી
70	„ „	છેકલી	છેલ્લી

71	„	Bun	But
72	4	दिंव्य	दिव्यं
72	2 (f. note)	crthodoz	orthodox
„	„	Vaiṇsavism	Vaiṣṇavism
„	5	देवाचे	देवाचे
76	8	यतुरी	यतुरा
78	5	तभारे	तभारे
81	15	अधणे	सधणे
91	24	वायु	वायु
92	4	duel	dual
98	18	सम्भुयय	समुच्यय
101	6	Lightening	Lightning
102	4	सूत्र	सू
103	18	प्रबल	प्रबल
113	3	कंड	कंड
„	„	वेधुं	वेधुं
114	7	समागम	समागम
116	12	Resika	Rasika
117	18	जलिये	जलिये
118	22	he	be
119	7	he	she
120	2	ल जया	लाजया
121	10	Short	that
121	19	वर्चनीय	वर्चनीय
„	„	यनीवर्चनीय	अनिवर्चनीय

THAKKAR VASSANJI MADHAVJI LECTURES.

1929 - 30.

GUJARATI LITERATURE.

LECTURE I.

(Introductory.)

The subject chosen by me for these lectures is Gujarātī Language and Literature. I couple with Literature the factor of Language for obvious reasons. Thought and Speech are indissolubly intertwined: वागर्थौ शृङ्खलौ conveyed to the great poet Kālidāsa, a subtle truth centuries ago. In a slightly different but kindred sense, language and literature are closely connected though not so closely and inseparably as Speech and Thought. It is possible under conceivable conditions, for a language to exist without literature. Such are the dialects of Kachchha and Konkana, the Bhil dialects, and several others spoken by the more or less uncultured hill-tribes all over India, to say nothing of similar languages current among such tribes and races all over the world. They possess no literature in the true sense of the term, the folk-lore compositions, usually traditional from mouth to mouth cannot possess the claim to literature, for literature presupposes a special kind of cultural conditions.

[The ¹ “Christian Purāṇa” written in Konkani is an exception which proves the rule, especially as the work is a deliberate composition with a special purpose.]

In order to fix the distinction between language and literature and to determine the conditions which evolve literature out of a language, let us consider the factors which go to constitute language on the one hand and literature on the other.

Distinctive constituents of language and of literature.

Language, as we know, is related to Thought and Feeling in the same way as Form is related to Spirit. In this statement, I must confine myself to *articulate* language as distinguished from the forms of sound whereby animals give expression to their crude, syntnetic, thoughts and feelings. By the term ‘articulate’ I mean articulate both in form and thought ; for even if an animal sometimes produces a *formally* articulate sound, it lacks the element of analytical conception which comprises articulate thought.

We need not go into the debated question of the origin of language, whether its source is convention or impulse—for we have primarily to deal with literature as evolved by language. That being our purpose today, we must confine ourselves to the development of thought-ex-

Stages of thought expression:— the noun-stage.

1. Composed by Father Thomas Stephens, and edited by J. L. Saldanha-Date of Composition A.D. 1614; edited in 1907 A. D.

pression. When a child begins to speak, it starts with the noun-stage. A cow, a horse, a cat, a dog, (गाय, घोड़े, बिल्ली, कुत्ते) are words which the child picks up in the initial stage of speech; animals and objects, by their concrete form and simplicity of idea, as also their familiarity, come ready to the child-intellect.

The next stage is that of abstract ideas, as contained in adjectives and verbs and later on in abstract nouns, terms of relativity, and terms of feeling. How this stage comes on is a subtle question of psychology of language. How a child who first knows and utters 'dog', 'cow', &c., proceeds to know and say it is white, it runs, it is loveable or how it further says 'I like this dog', 'hate this other dog' or 'I like my dog better than yours' and so forth is a point of thought-evolution which baffles analysis. To illustrate further the complexity of ideas, just hear a child of three years say to you: तुमारे दूध लेइये? (Do you want milk?) In this question the idea underlying the term लेइये is surely a complex one, covering the fact of deficiency and a desire to fill it, the have-not stage coupled with the have-stage. How such a child gets into its head this complex idea is more than man can tell.

Similar in nature, though not in intensity, is the complexity, and non-concreteness, of the ideas conveyed by syntactical relations in a sentence, particularly in the case of inflectional languages like

Gujarātī and others, wherein the case terminations symbolize such ideas and contribute to their complexity. For instance, in the initial crude stage a child says: મા રોટલી આપી, if asked કોણે રોટલી આપી? At a higher stage it says માએ રોટલી આપી; thus the termination એ links up the syntax by introducing the notion of agentive relation. Of course, the child learns this by imitation and instruction in the form of correction. But that is only the outward part of the problem. Its inner part consists in the question: how *does* the child imbibe this idea implied in the case-termination? True, he learns it synthetically, but the underlying principle can be grasped by sub-conscious analysis, a process similar to the fact that instinct, association of ideas, and the like are but a sort of concentrated form of syllogistic reasoning. This much is certain that this step of intellectual functioning is the initial feature which distinguishes man from other animals.

There is a further stage. Language stops short at the first two stages, and literature begins at this third stage. It is the stage of *ideals*, and ideals presuppose cultural life, socially, politically, religiously. No literature worth the name is possible without this pre-existing condition of culture. All works of poetry, criticism, aesthetics, philosophy, art and science are the offsprings of culture,—intellectual, moral and spiritual, especially as they are evolved from the *life* of the people.

This being the genesis of literature—viz., ideals evolved out of the life of a people,

Has Gujarātī any literature?
Answer 'Yes' and 'No'

the question may be asked, it has been asked by inadequately informed persons,—Has Gujarātī any literature? The answer is—'Yes and

No, but pre-eminently—Yes'. I shall make myself clear, as this answer is paradoxical at first sight. In contrast with mere languages like Kachhī, Kokanī and the like Gujarātī distinctly possesses a literature, a literature of which any people can be proud. When placed by the side of advanced literatures like English, French, German, our language must take a very subordinate place. We need not despair, however. The causes which affect the growth of literature, viz. progress of a people's life, will operate, have begun to operate, in the case of our literature. It has taken centuries for English literature to develop and attain the eminent position it now occupies. As I have already said, our culture, the cultural growth of the people of Gujarāt, is a condition precedent which can secure the development of our literature.

We have the advantage of being heirs to an ancient civilization possessing high ideals, which has handed down to us a classical literature of world-eminence. If this heritage has not

The heritage of Gujarātī Literature.

profited us in a perceptible manner, the fault is our neglect till recently. However, the study of Sanskrit literature in our province during the last fifty years has sown the seed. The study of English

literature (as also of other literatures of the West through English translations) has supplied the element which watered this seed. The rise of modern Gujarātī poetry and its growth during the last fifty years bears eloquent testimony to this view. To alter the metaphor just used, I will repeat what I once said five years ago; a critic in the *Times of India* had made the statement that Gujarātī literature was a mere babe in arms, dandled in the early years in the arms of a British nurse. I remarked thereon that a more correct metaphorical presentation was to say that "Sanskrit literature furnishes the soil and English literature the manure, which have brought forth the plant of modern Gujarātī literature." ²

I have stressed here the importance of the dual influence, that of Sanskrit and English literatures as furnishing the cultural soul requisite for the inspiration of Gujarātī literature. To repeat once again, my statement of five years ago, "It is owing to this dual influence that modern Gujarātī poetry, especially as handled by cultured writers, possesses an originality of its own. The charge of imitation of English poetry or fiction which is lightly brought against the work of modern writers will be found unjust, when examined in the light of this important fact." Such critics ignore two important factors which create a thought-illusion in the shape of "imitation", the bogey of imitation verily, in their minds. The first

2. *Times of India* January 25, 1925, 'Our Readers' Views' columns.

factor consists in the substantial element of Sanskrit in the formation of modern Gujarātī literature. I am aware that the presence of this element in modern Gujarātī literature furnishes these critics with an excuse for levelling a further charge against this literature, the charge of high-flown and artificial diction. This charge may be true in the case of some exceptional writers, but as against a good many writers of established reputation for chastity of style, it is undeserved. It ignores the fact that Gujarātī is a growing language with a co-operating growing culture which necessitates the drawing upon Sanskrit for its vocabulary, when certain new ideas and ideals have to be clothed in fitting words. And for this purpose a real informing study of Sanskrit language and literature is absolutely necessary for the production of sound Gujarātī literature. Holding, as I do, this view I may at once state that I cannot accept the soundness of the movement for the separation of Sanskrit and the Vernaculars in the University curriculum of studies. I have fully expressed my views on this subject elsewhere.³ It really aims at cutting off the stream which should feed and fertilize the lands along its future course.⁴ This view was aptly and pithily presented by Mr. Mohanlal P. Dave in the

3. *The Times of India*, 25th June 1926 ; article headed "Sanskrit and the Vernaculars: A close Relation."

4. Since the above was written, the University has adopted a new arrangement for introducing the vernaculars in the Matriculation, First Year and Inter-Arts courses. I welcome it and congratulate the University on its first move in the right direction.

course of his Presidential Address before the 19th Annual conference of the V a d a n a g a r ā N ā g a r a M a n d a l a (p. 9 thereof), when he said that if asked whether he was a vernacularist or a classicist he just stated that he was a vernacularist and for that very reason a classicist.

This, however, is a digression, from which I may return to the second factor

ignored by critics who see nothing but imitation in modern Gujarātī literature. It is a factor of greater value and intrinsic significance than the first. In one word it is the factor of "kinship." This kinship is two fold: (1) Kinship between different literatures: 1. Kinship of humanity, and 2. Kinship of culture. The kinship of humanity is responsible for strange and otherwise inexplicable co-incidences of thought and expression in literary compositions of writers mutually unknown to each other.

I shall give only one instance:

न हि संहरते ज्योत्स्नां चन्द्रश्चाण्डालवेरमनि ।

The idea suggested in this line finds—not a response but,—a coincident expression in the following lines of Shakespeare :

“Yon silver beams,

Sleep they less sweetly on the cottage-thatch

Than on the dome of kings ?”

This co-incidence results from the principle of kinship of humanity. Each writer's genius has drawn upon ideas which are common property of all humanity.

I may yield to the temptation of giving one instance more. Dayārāma in his poem “રસધિકાનાં વખાણ” puts into the mouth of Rādhā's mother a number of more or less traditional, if not hackneyed, figures of speech, in the midst of which suddenly burst out an original idea describing her (Rādhā's) smile thus:-

“તહા રું હસવું જાયે વરસે મીઠડાં ફૂલડાં રે.”

“Your smile seems to rain sweet flowers.”

This idea may appear, to some, as unconsciously proceeding from a Western attitude. But it is simply a feature belonging to the common property of mankind. This will be our conviction when the idea is followed up by a simile of an ordinary type:

“દીપે ફુંદકળી સરખા તહારા દંત.”

which, after all, is not quite a lifeless traditional simile, when we see the connection between the first idea and the second one, which is but a charming aesthetic corollary of the first idea, the smile pre-cedes and reveals the beauty of the bud-like teeth.

The other kinship, the kinship of culture, is different from the above kinship. It unites in a subtle way the literatures of races of different parts of the globe, whose kindred cultures, when brought into natural contact, produce literary influence of one on the other. The difference between the two kinds of kinships lies in the fact that, while the first one is founded on the identity, or community, of ideas and ideals common to the whole of humanity, the second one has its basis on a more tangible

community of cultural ideals and thought rendered possible only by a visible contact between two races. It is this kind of kinship which has been the unperceived but potent influence of English literature on our Gujarātī literature during the last fifty years,—

The fallacious charge of imitation of the West in our modern literature.

an influence notably visible in poetry, fiction, and drama. Here, again the fallacious charge of imitation in the work of our modern writers stands refuted by this force of

cultural kinship. For after all Western and Eastern cultures can be traced back, far, far away, to their common Aryan ancestry, and it is really this uniting factor which renders the literatures of the East and West essentially allied, though different in externals. Even in the apparently distinctive art of music one discovers this kinship between the East and the West. Those who hear Italian or Spanish music are sometimes struck by a strange similarity in the tunes to our Indian *ragas* or melody. For even if these Western songs may not yield to an exact analysis of the constituent notes of particular *rāgas*, the synthetic presentation is marked by a similarity of aesthetic effect; and, after all, the correct definition of *rāga* is not furnished by a dissection of the same into its constituent note-formation, but a *rāga* is best realized as the aesthetic effect created on the hearer by the presentation of the notes in a particular formation synthetically. And it is here that kinship is perceived in the music of the West and the East in particular cases.

The influence of English literature on Gujarātī

Western influ-
ence not a mere
co-incidence, but
a providential re-
union of long
parted brothers.

literature is, thus, not a mere co-
incidence. It is but a providential
union ; the two brothers parted
long, long, ages ago, having wander-
ed away into several paths, and
adopted distinctive forms, find

themselves suddenly brought together into a loving
embrace. What I have said of two kinds of music,—
that created by nature (in the shape of the warbling
of a river) and that created by man (in the shape of
a band playing on its bank) may be applied, *mutatis
mutandis* to Western & Eastern literatures :

“ઉદ્યાનમાં મંત્રુર વાદ્યસમૂહ વાજે
તેશું ભણી સરિતગાન ગભીર ગાજે.
જે ગાન આ—પ્રકૃતિને મનુજે રચ્યાં જે—
ભેટી અહિં શું સહસા સુખમાં મચ્યાં એ !
જે ગાનખન્દુ કુળ એકથી ઉપન્યાં ને
છૂટાં વિદેશ વશી વેશ વિભિન્ન ધારે;

X X X X X
X X X X X

ને દીર્ઘ દીર્ઘ સમયે ફરી ભેટતામાં
સંબન્ધ પૂર્વ સ્મરો ઓળખો આવી રહ્યામાં,
આનન્દભેર ભરી પ્રેમનો બાથ મીઠી.”⁵

5 H r i d a y a - v i ṇ ā, poem entitled અજ્ઞાત હૃદયક્ષોભ pp. 2-3.

This kinship between English and Indian literatures is very aptly recognised and originally presented by Rev. J. D'Souza in an article of his entitled "The influence of English literature on Neo-Hinduism." ⁶.

Testimony of Rev. J. D'Souza regarding the Kinship of culture as affecting the two literatures.

I must, in fairness quote him :

"The Indian enthusiasm for English literature is based on something far deeper, I mean on a real, though perhaps an unconscious, sympathy for, and understanding of, the English character. x x

x x x x In spite of the thousand differences that separate Englishman and Indian there is a fundamental similarity in their characters. The artistic leanings of the two people are predominantly literary or rather poetic. The depth of sentiment which the Englishman hides within him often by means of an affected cynicism, his love of animals, of country life and of nature, his incurable home-sickness, his melancholy, are familiar to students of English poetry. The English language is essentially a poetic medium. x x

x x x x This feature of English character and speech goes straight to the heart of the Indian. He, too, has an affectinate, even sentimental nature. He is almost morbidly sensitive, has an unconquerable love of home and family, and an intense repugnance to tear himself

⁶ "The Examiner," Bombay, reproduced in the *Indian Reformer* of 23rd November 1929.

away from all that is old and familiar and consecrated by usage. His first efforts at abstract thought are marred by the intrusion of the poetic and mystic element. A beautiful metaphor has for him more force than a logical argument."

I have quoted fully enough. Even if some of us may hesitate to accept some of the details of this literary diagnosis, I feel sure that Rev. J. D'Souza has struck at the true basis of affinity in the literary spirit viz., what I call the kinship of culture.

This kinship of culture has furnished to modern Gujarātī poets potent, though latent, inspiration in the case of poems which are never-the-less original compositions, not imitations. To give only one telling illustration: Botādkar, a poet of high merit, who knew nothing of English or English literature, had explained to him by some friends, students in the Arts College, certain poems from Palgrave's Golden Treasury, notably Wordsworth's 'The Daffodils', 'The Solitary Reaper', and "The Soldier's Dream". The poet's genius took his inspiration from this mentally digested themes and assimilated the spirit in his poetical blood-system, and as a result we have three of his really charming poems, breathing originality and innate freshness. I mean his poems 'આવળનાં ફૂલને', તન્મયતા' and 'સ્વપ્ન'. Even if it may be contended that 'આવળનાં ફૂલને' has for its inspiring model the poem 'ફરેણા' in *Kusuma-mālā*, the fact that the 'Daffodils' was explained to Botādkar goes a long

Illustrations of this Kinship inspiring Gujarātī literature; Botādkar's poems.

way to prove the English source, a source common to both the pieces, 'આવળનાં ફૂલને' and 'કરેણા'. Thus the following lines in 'આવળનાં ફૂલને':

Elements of direct influence and independent poetic originality in his poems.

“ત્યાં સુંદર સમુદાય તમારો ઉર આકર્ષે,
શેા વધતો વિસ્તાર હીંચતો અવિરત હર્ષે !
દૂર અતિશય દૂર સુધી પથરાઈ રહેલાં”

present a true, and yet original, reflection of the undermentioned stanza from the “Daffodils:”

“They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay;
Ten thousand saw I at a glance
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.”

So also the effusion in

“હીંચો ઝહાલાં બાળ ! અનિલવહુરી ઊપન્નવો !
મુજ અંતરને એમ નવલ કે નાચ કરાવો !

bears an impress from the following two lines:

“And then my heart with pleasure fills
And dances with the Daffodils.”

If “આવળનાં ફૂલને” presents a close impress “of the Daffodils,” “તન્મયતા” strikes a clear note of originality, and even though the lines

I listened motionless and still;
And as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore
Long after it was heard no more.

in "The Solitary Reaper", find a distinct and faint
echo in

યર્થ સમાપ્તિ મતિ ગુણતી હતી,
પણ શકે ઉર ના દર્થ સંમતિ;
હજી મનોહર ગાન રહ્યું વહી,
શ્રવણ સ્પષ્ટ રહ્યા હજી સાંભળી.

our Gujarātī poet marks a distinct cleavage from the original and his Muse takes an original flight and presents a number of poetic pictures, full of grace and beauty. These furnish a sure proof of originality which disdains slavish imitation; and therefore I must quote the lines in full:

અનિલને શીખવી ગઈ ગાન એ,
પુનિત પાઠ નિરંતર જો કરે!
વિહંગના સ્વરમાં સ્વર એ મળ્યો,
તરુતણા પ્રતિપત્તિ વિશે વશ્યો.

ધર ભણી દિન અસ્ત થતાં વળું,
વિમળ એ સઘળે સ્વર સાંભળું;
રત્નની આવર્તો એ હૃદયે ધરી,
તિમિરમાં પણ એજ રહ્યા તરી.

શશિમુખા સહ એ વરસી રહ્યા,
ઉડુમુખે પણ એ ચમકી રહ્યા;
વદતી એ જ વહી ગઈ શર્વરી,
અનળ આવી ઉષા સ્વર એ ગ્રહી.

નિવસંતે। જઈ ક્ષેત્ર વિશે ફરી,
 મનુજ કોઈ પડે નજરે નહિ;
 અચલ એકલ ગાન રમી રહ્યું,
 ગગનગુંબજને ગજની રહ્યું.

The country girl's song, heard by the poet, in the field, has so filled his mind and heart, that he feels that she taught it to the blowing breeze, the sweet notes mingled with the warbling of the birds, and they dwelt in every leaf of the trees; the poet, at sunset, turns his feet homeward, and still the limpid notes of the girl's song ring in his ears; and when night comes bearing in its bosom the music of the girl's song, it floats upon the spreading darkness; the notes of her song rain down from the moon with its soothing rays; they sparkle in the twinkling orbs of the stars: The Night flees singing these notes, and in its flight, the notes are caught by the approaching Dawn. All these pictures are projected from the poet's imagination and mental impress long after he has left the field and gone home. And when he returns to the field next day, not a soul is present there, and yet the girl's song, or rather its spirit, is playing all over the place, even in her absence, and resounds the dome of the heavens with its melody.

I hope and trust no further proof is needed of the principle of kinship of culture between English literature and Gujarātī literature as a dominating and working factor.

What I have said in the foregoing discussion is intended simply to demonstrate the kinship between English and Gujarātī literatures based on kinship of culture. This does not mean that both are equal in extent and quality. As I have indicated before, the culture of which a literature is the exponent has its basis on the social, religious and spiritual life of the people. There is, at present, an undeniable difference between the two peoples in the matter of this life-basis. As a consequence the scope of our present day literature is comparatively limited. Our ancient Gujarātī literature also suffered from this limitation, and the result was a certain amount of monotony and a decided want of variety. This handicap of our ancient literature is recognised by a devoted admirer of that literature, I mean Divan Bahadur Keśavalāl H. Dhruva. He says:—

“ગત કાળના સાહિત્યમાં વિવિધતા અને વિશિષ્ટતા નહિ જેવી જ છે. એ વિવિધતા ખીલવતી અને એ વિશિષ્ટતા કેળવતી એ અહિં મળેલા કવિજનોનું ક્યેય હોવું જોઈએ. એના આદર્શ પશ્ચિમનું અત્યંત વિસ્તીર્ણ સાહિત્ય અને તેવુંજ વિસ્તીર્ણ વિવેચન પૂરા પાડે એમ છે. તેમાં જે પ્રેરણાબળ અને કલાવિધાન છે તેનો લાભ લેઈ આપણે આપણું સાહિત્ય બહુવાની શકીશું” 7

The limitations of the ancient literature noticed in the first part of this passage, are indicated in the

7. Presidential Address (p. 11) at the *Kavi-sammelan* held on 5th June 1929.

latter part as still existent to a certain extent in our modern literature, as the Divan Bahadur exhorts his hearers to remove them by drawing for our inspiration upon the models supplied by the extensive literature of the West. It has been truly said that "England's greatest gift to the common stock of civilization is her literature."⁸

I do not make this admission in a spirit of despair. The lines on which our modern literature is progressing inspire me with a radiant hope for its future extension and development. We have therefore to examine the condition of our literature, ancient and modern, and its relative position in the literature of the world. This examination I shall attempt to present before you in my next lecture.



8. *The Times of India*, 20th November 1929; Mr: C. Roden Buxton in '*Obiter Dicta*'.

LECTURE II.

Gujarātī Literature: its Place in the Literatures of the World.

As promised in the concluding portion of my last lecture, let us undertake an inquiry into the place of Gujarātī Literature in the Literatures of the World. It would be an ambitious undertaking to deal with all the various literatures of the world, even with pre-eminent ones among them. Our purpose will be served if we take into account English Literature, as representing the West and Sanskrit Literature as representing the literature of ancient East. It will be, besides, convenient to adopt this course, because, as shown in my last lecture, English and Sanskrit are the two languages which have mainly influenced our literature, i. e. Modern Gujarātī Literature, and thus we are in possession of a linking principle to enable us to institute profitable comparison.

In this connection let me remind you, even at the risk of apparent repetition, of the important consideration that the literature of a people is essentially connected with the cultural life of the people, socially, politically, and spiritually. For, as a rule, literature reflects this life. From this it must not be concluded that the writers of

Should the poet, the novelist & others be the creatures of their times? or should they give the lead to the people?

a people,—their poets, novelists, preachers etc.—must be mere tools in the hands of the people, that they must be their mere spokesmen, voicing their thoughts, ideals and ambitions, leaving no independence for them to rise above their limited vision, Men of power and originality must and will arise to give them a lead with the help of their exalted vision from the summit of their genius. It is a poor fallacy to assert that no writer can be in advance of his times. In this connection, the remarks of Gervinus in his criticism of Hamlet are worth noting:

He says:—

Gervinus' view. “In this anticipation there lies on the side of the poet a true greatness; there is no doubt that in this deep sensibility, as well as in the high intelligence with which he invested Hamlet very few of his contemporaries could follow him. The honour of being in advance of the age is in most cases only equivocal. A man should belong to his age and the work which lies nearest he should advance according to his ability. Anticipating time, moreover, is too often the incapability of idealistic enthusiasts to bear the actual. It is only when a man, such as Shakespeare, entirely and fully belongs first to his age and its cultivation and business in every essential direction, and also by his power of mind anticipates the method of thought and feeling in generations to come, that we can respect this advanced position as the token of a true and great superiority”.

(Commentaries on Shakespeare: Hamlet; p. 574).

Gervinus is here holding the balance equally between the two theories, the one holding that an author should march with his times, the other holding that greatness consists in marching in

advance of his times. And even in the case of the latter Gervinus requires that the great man who anticipates future time must none-the-less have his one foot planted well in the rank and file of the men of his times, as Shakespeare could do.

Against this view,—not quite against it but by the side of it,—let us hear Carlyle; he says:—

“ I liken common languid times, with their unbelief,
 distress, perplexity, x x impotently
 Carlyle's view. crumbling down into even worst distress
 towards ruin: all this I liken to dry dead
 fuel, waiting for the lightning out of heaven that shall kindle
 it. The great man with his free force direct out of God's
 own hand, is the lightning. x x x x
 Those are critics of small vision, I think, who cry: ‘See is
 it not the sticks that made the fire?’ ”

(Heroes and Hero-Worship, p. 13. The World's
 Classics Series).

Here we find Carlyle refuting the claim of short-
 visioned critics that great men are, after all, the
 products of their times. The two
 views, that of Gervinus and that of
 Carlyle are not necessarily opposed
 to each other; it is, rather, that one
 supplements the other, each in its
 own way. No doubt, there are
 some who claim for themselves the right of origin-
 ality, when really they are nothing more than eccen-
 tric performers. Gervinus offers a sober antidote to
 such eccentricities. The man who pretends that he
 cannot sing in tune with his choir, but must profess
 to lead it by his own notes, is sure to find that he is

singing all wrong. For such a person Gervinus' view is fully true. While Carlyle is equally true when he advocates the claim of really great men who are truly new lights from the firmament, and are wrongly regarded as the products of their age. It wont do for such men to drown themselves in the mass of mediocrities or nonentities and sing feebly with the feeble-noted hosts. They are entitled to strike new and unknown chords, let those who can follow them. These giants cannot be compelled to be slaves of the people; in other words, they cannot be cooped, caged, and confined by their environments; they will influence their environments by their innate power.

Bearing these standpoints in mind, in judging the

Are there any giants in our literature? A glance at our cultural history necessary.

merits of the literature of a people, we must try to see whether there have been or there are any giants towering over their fellowmen. But before we apply this test in the case of our Gujarātī Literature, let us once again revert to the thesis

that literature presupposes cultural history of the people; and with this view we must cast a hurried glance over the history of our province, mainly in so far as it illuminates our literature, ancient and modern, so that we can correctly place our literature comparatively in the literature of the world as represented by English in the West and Sanskrit in the East.

But before we do this, let us first consider the basis for this, I mean our history.

Scantiness of historical materials in the case of our province.

As regards this we have to bear in mind that the means of placing before our minds a vivid picture of the history of our people in all its branches

are unfortunately scanty. We are poor in this respect. The fact is that the historical sense, the historical instinct, has been more or less inactive in India, ancient and modern, and as a result we have to construct our history from materials scattered in out-of-the-way places, materials of varying historical value, and scanty in quantity and often poor in quality. Even as regards English History one of the greatest thinkers of England has lamented the deficiency of historical records from the point of view of the people and their evolution. In his History of the French Revolution Carlyle has a suggestive passage; he says:—

“The Oak grows silently, in the forest a thousand years; only in the thousandth year when the woodman arrives with his axe, is there heard an echoing through the solitudes, and the oak announces itself when with far-sounding crash, it falls. How silent too was the planting of the acorn, scattered from the lap of some wandering wind! Nay, when our oak flowered or put on its leaves (its glad Events), what shout of proclamation could there be? Hardly from the most observant a word of recognition. These things *be-fell* not, they were slowly *done*: not in an hour but through the flight of days. What has to be said of it? This hour seemed altogether as the last was, as the next would be.”

Want felt in the case of English history: Carlyle's view.

One-sided though the view herein expressed in

unrivalled language may be, we have to fix our eye on the truth it is intended to convey. English history is, after all, not lacking in works that notice the growth of the Great Oak through ages, works that do not content themselves with the recording of the Great Event that befell. And yet the great sage felt the need of something deeper into the life of the people, especially as regards the French Revolution,—though since his times there have been works which have to some extent supplied the want emphasized by him. But, if this is the case with countries where the historical sense has been awake through all these centuries, what shall we say of poor India and, to come nearer home, our own province—poor Gujarāt?

Viewed from this point Govardhanram Tri-
 pāthī's essay on "The Classical
 Poets of Gujarāt" is of rare value.
 Whatever its defects and deficiencies,
 it embodies an attempt, perhaps
 first of its kind, to view the litera-
 ture of Gujarāt in the light of the
 history of its people, their life,
 their growth (or want of it), their whole national
 fabric, whatever its value. The value of the work
 has, no doubt, to be discounted to a certain extent
 on account of the poverty of data on which Govar-
 dhanram has built his edifice and the rather undue
 freedom he has given to the power of imagination in
 creating his picture. I recognise the value of histori-
 cal imagination. But it has a control to recognize.

The literature of a people can never be great unless they themselves are great.

Greatness of a people, a condition antecedent for the greatness of their literature; such greatness should be a continuous stream.

This is a truth which is too often forgotten. It is not enough that a people should *have* been great once. Their greatness must be a continued living stream. Past greatness may leave behind it gleams that are but shadows by the side of the light of living greatness. Unless

the light is fed constantly by national life and aspirations, it is bound to flicker and fade or burn in a one-sided flame. If we bear these truths in mind, we can at once see the force of contrast between Western literature (as also to some extent, our ancient Sanskrit literature) and the modern literature of our country. English literature has a continuous growth of over ten centuries, in conditions of national development in all directions,—politics, trade, industry, religion, social institutions, science, commerce, extensive voyages,—in short all that goes to build up a culture of a wide-spread nature. On the other hand, our ancient Indian civilization with its unrivalled glory in a number of branches of knowledge, art, industry, and national development, centuries ago, got dried up under adverse influences; and

The stagnation of Gujarātī literature in the past; regeneration required.

although it ran in stray streams during some centuries further on, for all practical purposes our vernacular literatures had to be regenerated almost entirely. What they

inherited from the past was but a fraction, a poor

and one-sided heritage, much damaged in the process of transmission, and, national life having run dry for a number of centuries, no wonder that our literary life had to be started afresh. Thus it is that we are centuries behind English literature in development although we are heirs to a civilization far far more ancient.

We can now see how it was that our old Gujarātī literature was almost entirely devoted to religious subjects of a stereotyped kind, *Ākhyānas* borrowed from the ancient epics and *Purāṇās*, with rare exceptions in the shape of excursions into fiction and similar branches. The output is poor in variety and its quality disheartening in comparison with the advanced literatures of the world. I am speaking in no spirit of disparagement or despair. I cannot help noticing and noting facts as they are; and in doing so I also note some pleasant features, signs of coming light and progress, though the day be far distant when our modern literature will take rank with the advanced literatures of the world. Philosophy, Science, History, Politics, Economics, and all the various branches of modern intellectual advance are, to our vernacular literature, an untrodden path,—I speak of works of originality in these directions, not the scattered feeble attempts at translations and borrowings that are being made. We have a long long journey before us in this line of progress. But the contact with

Stereotyped nature of old Gujarātī literature.

Hopeful signs of progress in our modern literature.

Western literature and the revival of the study of Sanskrit along with change in our aspirations, socially, politically, industrially, are beginning to have effect on our literary activity. This state of things need not dishearten us; it must inspire us to higher efforts, more varied and continuous

High resolve, exalted ambition vs. self-contentment, than hitherto. For this we need a spirit of high resolve, exalted ambition, and the power to rise above the spirit of poor self-contentment such as is embodied in the lines:

भेट्यां न्दानां वधु भेट्यासां, तो न्दानां पशु भेट्यां;

व्योमदीप रवि नक्षत्रिन्दु तो धरतीवशं नहिं ज्योतां.

Such a spirit of sordid satisfaction with our poor धरतीवशी will be an obstacle in our efforts to bring forth splendid lamps of the heavens like the sun.

My contention that unless we are nationally

Sublime philosophical truths commonly current in the masses; but their spirit and true import lost in their very currency.

great our literature cannot be great is not vitiated by the fact that great and sublime truths of philosophy have permeated the popular mind in our country in a manner unknown in other lands. I recognise this fact. But I also recognize, I cannot shut my eyes to, the equally important fact that these sublime truths,

in coming as a heritage from the hoary past, have lost much of their real import, splendour and spirit, and what the masses handle as philosophic truths are hardly realized by them in their real sublimity;

they are reduced to more or less unmeaning cant; they are like the tattered and faded cloak of a bygone ancestry which the great-grand-sons pass on from generation to generation as an heirloom of once-splendid glory. Thus it is that many

Most of our old poetry lacks living fire when handling these truths, some noble exceptions. Vedantic truths and doctrines embodied in the old poetry of our province lack living fire and glow, and present the appearance of hackneyed ideas or expressions, borrowed from tradition, not born of the throes of poetic genius. Exceptions are, of course, seen as we go back to our earliest poets; but occasional exceptions prove the rule. Such an exception is found in these lines of Narsinha Mehta:

જગીને જોઈ તે જગત દીસે નહિ બંધમાં અટપટા ભોગ ભાસે,
ભાસ

ચિત્ત ચૈતન્ય વિદાસ તદ્રૂપ છે;—બ્રહ્મ લટકાં કરે બ્રહ્મ પાસે.

And yet—and yet, (I state this with tremblings of diffidence and reservations)—I feel even in these lines a lack of real poetic presentation.

In order that the place of our literature in the literatures of the world may be presented in its correct orientation, let us examine it concretely, assess its true value and worth, fully recognizing its limitations at the same time. As already stated the bulk of our old literature selected religion for its theme. This, however, must be divided into two aspects:

Divisions of our old poetry.
(1) ascetic. and
(2) Passionate, the latter having real poetic merit, or objectionable eroticism.

(1) Ascetic:—*वैराग्यपरायण*.

and (2) Passionate-i. e, permeated with devotion and love in its varied forms, materual, erotic etc., How far poems under these classes answer the requirements of true poetry is a large question which I cannot go into in full detail here. But the general remark may be made that while *शु-तरस* which is allowed a place in poetic *rasas* by sufferance is developed with some effect and skill in rare pieces, a majority of poems devoted to this branch must be regarded as inferior poetry; and, on the other hand, the passionate branch of the religious poetry of Gujarāt divides itself into two kinds of merit, (1) real poetic fervour and (2) objectionable eroticism.

Govardhanram Tripāthī (in his "Classical Poets of Gujarāt") attempts to find an

G. M. Tripāthī's defence of our erotic poetry with Kṛishṇa as the central figure.

answer to the natural question: Why intensely erotic literature which surrounds the central figure of Kṛishṇa could have been regarded as unobjectionable and why "What

pious and virtuous women never dream of or talk of in actual life is sung with zest in the presence of parents and husbands when it forms an incident in the divine life of Kṛishṇa". According to him the life and doings of Kṛishṇa which defied the conventions of society were to be judged, not by the ordinary canons of morality while the rules of conduct for ordinary mortals were to be taken from the direct *word* of the God Kṛishṇa. To the devotee of Kṛishṇa the overwhelming flow of *Bhakti* was all in all; religion was made "independent of Ethical

and Social codes". I need not comment here on the special pleading which Govardhanram has carried to an extreme point, but accepting his explanation in a limited way I may venture a supplementary suggestion. We must remember that to the devotee of

A supplementary explanation suggested.

Kṛishṇa, the hero was an object of worship and reverence, as a divine personality. That being the case,

any aspect of શૃંગાર રસ with regard to that personality ought really to evoke a sense of revolt, just as the love-making of parents would in the eyes of their children. If, then, the love-making of Kṛishṇa and Rādhā or other Gopīs do not offend the sense of propriety of the Gujarātī reader-be he a કૃષ્ણભક્ત or otherwise, there must be some neutralizing factor, some idealizing element, which transforms the whole affair, translates the actions and feelings of the hero of the poetry from the sphere of the personal to that of the impersonal. In short, it is the impersonalizing action of poetry-the essential function of રસ shown in the analysis of it by Abhinavagupta Āchārya,-that accounts for the psychology of the શૃંગાર રસ of Kṛishṇa as appealing to the Indian reader. It is the aestheticizing of the ethical or, rather, the anti-ethical, element in these poems that partly explains the position. Take only one instance:

હુ શું જાણું ંહાણે મુજમાં શું દીકું ?
વારે વારે સહામું ભાગે મુખ લાગે મીકું ; હું શું.
જાઉં જગ ભરવા ત્હેણાં પૂંડે પૂંડે આવે.
વગર બોલાવ્યે ંહાણે બેઠકું ચઢાવે. હું શું.

Or, one more specimen:

જળ જતાં આજ ઘૂંઘટડામાં મોહનનું સુખ દીકુંરે,
 અમૃતરસ પણ એ થકી શીકો બાઈ, એ હેતું લાગ્યું છે મુને મીઠુંરે.
 એહેને પણ કાંઈ નથી રે અજાણ્યું, મુને સાન કરી સમજાવુંરે,
 ચાંપી રહે કરી હેત જણાવ્યું મુને સાહામાં તે નેત્ર નચાવી રે.
 શું કહું સુખડું તે જ સમાનું, શર સ્નેહતણાં ઉર વાગ્યાં રે,
 મનમાં આવે તે મુખે કયમ કહેવું ? પેલા દુરિજન દૈત્યશા લાગ્યા રે.
 રસિયો રૂપાળો ચતુર કો એવો નથી અવર ને નિશ્ચ ભાગ્યુંરે,
 ધનભાગ્ય જેણે દયાના પ્રીતમ સંગ મનગમતું સુખ મહાલ્યુંરે.

The hero and heroine here are as impersonal as in any neutral play, and the name or part of Kṛishṇa is purely conventional, dropping the personal element altogether.

None-the-less, having said and conceded so far in favour of this aspect of this

The other side of the picture: such erotic poetry is but a cloak to the poet's own sullied ideas and it tends to have a baneful effect on the readers' minds.

erotic branch of our poetry, I can concede no further; and I must disclose another side of the picture. For after all is said, the great bulk of this poetry is marked by a double offence; firstly, that, too often, it is the outpouring of the poet's own mind, infected by ideas and feelings violating the sense of propriety and ethical canons, that

is responsible for such erotic outbursts, wherein the perverted moral sense of the writer tries to take shelter behind the sanctified name and associations of Kṛishṇa; and secondly, this sort of freedom and license of writing is sure to have a baneful effect as it in fact *has* had such effect, on the life and conduct of the people in general. The very life which

Dayārām of Dabhoi led is a glaring instance in point. I discount greatly the poor attempts made recently by some blind devotees of Dayārām to refute the charges against his character. It would take too much space to give my reasons for such discounting.

There is another angle of vision from which this kind of passion-outpourings may be viewed. One of Plato's charges against creative literature was that it fostered the emotional part of man's nature to the detriment of the higher and intellectual. Aristotle's reply to this charge is based upon a medical illustration. 'The appeal of poetry to the passions instead of permanently fostering the emotional element, purges man's nature by carrying off any excess of this element⁹. This view may be brought into service in replying to the objections to the kind of erotic poetry we are speaking of. And yet, it is possible to misuse such defence. With this warning, we may, to some extent, excuse or explain the possibility of such poetry. But the worst defence of this erotic poetry that I have come across is the one which regards the unconventional love of Kṛishṇa and the Gopīs as a mere model or as measure of the intensity of *bhakti* and self-surrender of the devotee to his God,¹⁰

9 "Judgment in Literature" by Basil Worsfold (The Temple Primers) Page 25.

10 This defence is put forward by Tansukhram M. Tripāthī in his essay on Mirābāī; Introduction to *Brihat-Kāvya Dohana*, Volume 7, page 53.

On the ascetic side, our literature discloses an equally great profusion. The જ્ઞાન વૈરાગ્ય poetry of Narsinha bears testimony to occasional flights into philosophical sublimity of a high order, as, for instance, in his well-known *pada*:-

“નિરખ ને ગગનમાં કોણ ધૂમી રહ્યો
તે જ હું તે જ હું શબ્દ બોલે.”

Profusion of ascetic poetry in our poets; occasional sublimity of idea; such poetry almost conventional as an antidote to erotic poetry in the same poet.

which I have quoted fully on another occasion. But even in this line, a majority of his poems sink into conventional common-place with very little really poetic element in it. During ages subsequent to Narsinha there is to be seen this latter kind of tendency. It seems that it was the vogue to compose such poems as a complement to શૃંગાર રસ poetry. Even as late as Dayārām, after he had drunk deep at the fountain of શૃંગાર રસ poetry, in later life he gives us poetry of ascetic type, almost as an antidote to his earlier eroticism; witness his lines:

હાવાં તો શ્રી હરિને ભજે રે ભજે રે મન; હાવાં.

આવીને કૃપા કર્યો તે સંસાર મુખ

હાવાં હેમાં નથી રે મજો રે મજો;

શાહી ગઈ ને સફેદી આવી જુઓ,

કાંક તો લાલચથી લજે રે લજે રે: મન.

Similarly Bhālaṇa, more or less a contemporary of

Narsinha, presents the same double feature of શૃંગાર and નીતિ ભક્તિ in his works. We have also a large store of didactic poetry which is not poetry at all. Then we possess a great mass of *ākhyāna* poetry of which Premānanda was a towering master disclosing great versatility and power, in spite of the fact that he borrowed, sometimes wholesale, from his predecessors like Nākara especially. Side by side we have Puranic poetry, which is more of a narrative type than anything else. Rarely we have secular stories like માધવાનંદ કામકેદાર દોષધર પ્રબંધ. Later on Sāmala presents us with an abundance of stories, all secular, romantic, and social. Their value as poetry is, after all, poor,—very poor.

What is the back-ground, or rather the soil, which gave us all this kind of literature? We find it in the political history of Gujarat during all these centuries, coupled with its religious history. A fairly long period of political unrest, subjugation, lifelessness, religious resignation supported by ancient tradition of poor Vedanta, conventional *Bhakti*,—all these were the forces which went to make up our literature. With the advent of British connection there dawned a new epoch, gradually no doubt, as dim daylight streaks appear, till now we are,—not quite in the full glory of the mid-day sun but mounting up the heavens, slowly, slowly, slowly. Yet the influence of this contact

The Soil in which this literature grew; our political and religious history. Advent of British connection opened a dawn, slowly promising a fuller light.

with Western culture made itself felt dimly in the works of pioneers like Dalpatrama and Narmadaśankara, who, while breathing the new spirit in their poetry faintly, still had the old tradition, clinging to their Muse. Thus, they stick to the older convention of supplementing their other (newer) compositions by didactic and colourless *Bhakti* poetry; nay, their new poetry was not quite new, but was inwardly tinged by the hues of the older school, sticking to the narrative and commonplace styles of thought.

Introduction of University education; its results. Rise of modern literature, poetic, fictional, dramatic. A rapid survey thereof.

With the introduction of the University studies which threw open the literature of the West and included a study of Sanskrit, an entirely new vision and inspiration mark the literature of Gujarat. This phase began a little over half a century ago, and works of Harilal Dhruva, Bhimarao Bholanath, during the period linking the old and new Schools, and then those of Narsinharao Bholanath, Govardhanaram Tripathi, Daulatram Kriparam, Manilal Dwivedi, B. K. Thakor, Manisankar Bhatta, "Kalāpi", Nanlal Kavi, Botadkar, Khabardar, Dāhyābhāi Derāsari and others furnish us with the modern school nurtured by the influences just noted,—influences which worked on originally existing genius; while in the branch of prose literature, fiction headed by Nandaśankara Tulajāśankara and followed by the author of the encyclopoedic work *Sarasvatī-*

chandra, and in recent times adorned by the brilliant work of K. M. Munshi constitutes a fairly large bulk;- I omit minor writers on purpose. In the sphere of drama we do possess no doubt, a few works of distinction, - રાઈને પર્વત, જયા જયન્ત, and a very few others; the rest are poor in merit.

I must assign a separate place to works of criticism where Navalarāma and Ramanabhāi figure as pioneers; Narsinharao Bholanath's contribution in this line being comparatively recent and awaiting the verdict of time. Works of humour are very few, and Ramanabhai's ભદ્રભદ્ર stands apart in its unique quality as a masterpiece. I ignore the writings influenced by Persian literature, because of their limited and superficial nature and also because they are marked by pseudo-Sufism which I regard as unnatural and unnational. Considering the limits of my lecture, I can now say that this practically exhausts the stores of Gujarātī literature, old and new.

And now, our deficiencies:—

We are poor in works of Philosophy, History, Science, Economics, Biography, Epic poetry and numerous other branches of literature which are a distinguishing feature of the West. Why, even our ancient Sanskrit literature can boast of a variety in subjects, original-

Our deficiencies in other branches of literature.

ity of conception, and solid merit. By the side of these two giant literatures, Western and Sanskrit, our Gujarātī literature gets dwarfed perceptibly. For these reasons, we must humbly confess our backward state as yet; and yet, as already stated, we have no need to despair. If we remove our intrinsic faults and strive to fill up our deficiencies,—a glorious future is before us.



LECTURE III.

NARASINHA MEHTA.

(The Flame of Love and the Light of Knowledge).

Literary giants Narasinha Mehta or Akho and Premānanda, who rescue our literature from the taunt of insignificance.

In my previous lectures I laid stress on a special feature which furnishes a test of the value of, and lends distinction to, the literature of a people. I have conceded or rather laid down as an essential condition, that the literature of a people cannot be great unless the people themselves are great. This being so, our

Gujarātī literature may be regarded as not great as yet. However the abovenamed condition does not preclude the chances of a literature occasionally obtaining a distinction of its own by the appearance of some great writers; poets and singers who stand apart from the rest on the strength of their own individual greatness. This brings in another consideration which furnishes an exception, as it were, to the above-mentioned condition; and that is the point, whether there are, in a particular literature, any giants whose works maintain the dignity of that literature. I therefore propose to examine whether we have any such giants in our literature. You will all agree with me that we *have*

such giants who rescue the reputation of our literature from the taunt of insignificance. I mean Narasinha, Akho, and Premānanda,—names which will recur to us all as such giants. I claim for them this honor, specially as I am aware that attempts have been made to belittle our literature in comparison with Hindī, for instance, amongst other literatures of India. Sir George

Sir George Grierson's charge of insignificance against Gujarātī literature.

Grierson has stated that Gujarātī language has not produced any giants like Tulasidāsa, Suradāsa, and others.¹¹ I am afraid this statement is made by ignoring the works of Narasinha Mehta, Akho, and

Premānanda and others. I have reason to suspect that Sir George Grierson was not in direct touch with our literature as he was with Hindī literature. We who know at first hand the literary value of the works of these can claim for them a pre-eminent place in the galaxy of Indian poets.

Out of these I propose to take up Narasinha Mehta and his literary work in this

A picture of the man and his times, for viewing Narsinha's work in its proper setting.

lecture and the next one. Of Narsinha Mehta's personal history and life very little is known except by tradition and from his own works and those of subsequent poets. I need not go into its

details as they are well known to all students of

11. Article on Vernacular Literature in the Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. III (1903 A. D.), p. 43.

Gujarātī literature. I shall devote this lecture to an appreciation of his poetry. In order to do this properly, however, it will be necessary to place before us a picture of the man and his times. By a picture of the man I do not mean a material reproduction of his personal appearance. Such picture is presented before our eyes by various editors, and it has no foundation in reality. What I mean is a presentation of his personality as it is impressed on our minds by a study of his literary work and well known events in his life. Let me attempt such a presentation:—I transport myself to the ancient city of Janāgaḍha of five centuries ago by the help of imagination, and what do I behold? Narasinha steeped in devotion to Kṛishṇa, bearing *tilaka* marks on his body, wearing *tulasī māṭā*, playing the *karatāla* with his hands. On his face—a face of religious humility and mildness—I see a quiet defiance of public opinion, the tongue whereof is steeped in slander and ridicule; a superior disregard of hide-bound social custom; he is absorbed in the ecstasy of religious song; from his eyes emanates a wondrous power which turns his erotic songs into words of religious Love; he dreams not whether these erotic songs are likely to taint the minds of people who know not; his worshipping eye looks steadfastly at a single Goal: anon he takes up a flaming torch and stands before Kṛishṇa and his Gopīs performing their sportful *rāsa*, proud to call himself their દીવડિયા, the Torch-bearer. The

kaleidoscope of my imagination takes a twist, and I see Narsinha sitting silent in front of his Muse who holds in her hand a mirror wherein is faithfully reflected the poet's inward soul burning with religious fervour which heedeth not the wicked taunts of the ignorant mob; I see the Muse walking proudly like a fullgrown damsel, strong in her errand of vigorous Love. Another twist of the kaleidoscope, and the Muse stands before the poet, her garments and ornaments of erotic hues cast off, wearing the robes of high ascetic trance, robes resplendent with the Light of Philosophic Knowledge—a veritable *Yogini* this altered Muse of his.

I admit, this picture does not present an exact likeness of the physical form of our poet. But as a whole it places before us the formation of his poetic soul as closely as sympathetic imagination can. And now a picture of his times: for the portrait of a hero gains correct light by the help of its setting, background and atmosphere.

The date of Narasinha Mehta; the orthodox view on the subject subjected to criticism by several scholars.

For this we have first of all to fix the date of Narasinha. The hitherto accepted date is 1414 A.D. to 1480 A.D. This has been called into question by certain critics. Professor Anandasankara B. Dhruva in an able and illuminating article in his *Journal*¹² sounded the first note of a cautious doubt on this point. His line of argument is as under:—

12. 'Vasanta' V. S. 1961 Bhādrapada.

Narsinha Mehta in his work entitled *Surata Sangrāma* mentions the names of the friends of Rādhā, viz, Chandrā-vali, Lalitā, Viśākhā. These names are not found in Jayadeva's *Gita Govinda*. But they are found in *Bhaviṣhyottara Purāṇa*. They are also mentioned in a work entitled *Ujjvala-Nīla-Maṇi*,¹³ written by Rūpadeva Gosvāmī, a pupil of Chaitanya. In a play written by the same author entitled *Vidagdha-Mādhava*, Rādhā, Viśākhā and Lalitā figure as characters. Now, Rūpadeva Gosvāmī flourished after 1488 A.D. whereas Narsinha Mehta's period ends in 1480 A.D. It will, therefore, be necessary as Prof. Ānandaśankara suggests, to shift Narsinha Mehta to a later period especially because the period assigned by orthodox opinion rests entirely on hearsay, on enquiries made by Ichhārāma Sūryarāma and Haragovindadāsa Kāṇṭāvālā from the Nāgaras of Jūnāgaḍha, whose sources or authority, however, are unknown. There is another alternative theory which Prof. Ānandaśankara puts forth and meets. The friends of Rādhā mentioned in *Ujjvala-Nīla-Maṇi* are stated as शास्त्रप्रसिद्धाः (well-known in earlier śāstras), and this adjective is explained by the commentator, Jīva Gosvāmī, thus: शास्त्रं भविष्योत्तरं स्कान्दगतं प्रल्हादसंहितादि च। It can then be contended that Narsinha Mehta owed these names, not to

13. तत्र शास्त्रप्रसिद्धास्तु राधा चन्द्रावली तथा। विशाखा ललिता श्यामा

Ujjvala-Nīla-Maṇi but to *Bharishyottara Purāṇa*. Prof. Ānandaśankara meets this contention by arguing that, if there is no stronger evidence for the orthodox date of Narsinha Mehtā than popular tradition, it is more probable that the names are taken by our poet from the cult of Chaitanya rather than that they should have been taken from an out-of-the-way corner of *Bharishya Purāṇa*, especially as the names are not found in any well-known literary works of a period before that time. (B)

[D. B. Keśavalāl Dhruva explains Jayadeva's silence in his *Gīta Govinda* as

D. B. Kes'avalal Dhruva on Jayadeva's silence as to the names of Rādhā's friends.

regards the names of the only two female friends of Rādhā by stating that he ignored this detail as the friends were minor characters in the episode.¹⁴ This accounting is not quite satisfying. It is quite possible that *Bharishya Purāṇa*, or rather such version thereof as mentions the names of these sakhs, may have come into existence *after* the time of Jayadeva.]

(B)

There are honest but blindly orthodox Vaiṣṇavas who go the length of believing and saying that Narasinha learnt the names of Lalitā and other sakhs of Rādhā when he actually witnessed the Rāsa of Kṛishṇa and the Gopīs. To men of this type the question is easily solved by cutting the Gordian knot in this manner (*Vide* *infra*, note N in Lecture IV).

14. Preface to his first edition of *Gīta-Govinda*, p. 15, first paragraph.

Then we hear Mr. Kanaiyālal Munshi's view

K. M. Munshi on the date of Narasinha Mehta.—his arguments stated and appreciated: Negative evidence supplied by the *Kadachhā* of Govindādāsa, companion of Chaitanya in his visit to Jūnāgaḍha in 1511 A. D. Narasinha not mentioned there

about Narsinha Mehta's time. Rai Saheb Dinesāchandra Sena, B.A., tells us¹⁵ that Chaitanya and three companions visited Jūnāgaḍha in A. D. 511, put up at the house of one, Mīraji by name, and went to the temple of 'Rosanji' (? Raṇachhoḍaji?). This information is taken by the author from the *Kadachhā* (or *Kadakkhā*) composed by Govindāsa, one of the companions. There is absolutely no mention of Narasinha Mehta in the account of this visit to Jūnāgaḍha. If Narasinha had passed

away in 1480, it is highly improbable that such a well-known *bhakta* as Narasinha should have been wiped out from local memory within three decades.

In addition to this negative argument, Mr.

Date of Hāra-Māla: suggested alteration on astronomical calculations.

Munshi relies on the one based on astronomical calculation of the year 1512 V. S. given at the end of Narasinha's *Hāra Mālā* and the month, date, & c., and their correspondence. The calculations

made out for him show that 1572 and not 1512 tallies with the month, and day.

સંવત પંદર આરોતરો, ચૈત્રી સપ્તમી, ને સોમવાર
is the line which Mr. Munshi concludes is wrong for આરોતરો. The couplet which has this line has

15. "Chaitanya and his Companions", page 263.

undergone various changes, as is seen from the preface to the Gujarātī Press edition of Narasinha Mehtā's works and it shows the great uncertainty which attends this question. Even the authorship of *Hāra Mālā* is a bone of contention. Mr. Munshi

Nākara's silence about Naaasinha Mehta; Nākara's period 1491 to 1574 A. D.

further bases his argument on references to Narasinha Mehta and incidents in his life by poets who came after him and on the silence of Nākara (1414 to 1574 A. D.) as regards Narasinha Mehtā. Durgā-

śankara S'āstrī has contributed a thoughtful criticism of Munshi's theory. Whatever the case be, Mr. Munshi's very late date (1509 to 1600 A. D.) is difficult to adjust with other poets after him.

This view has been vigorously opposed by Mr. Ambālāl Jānī and others on historical grounds based on the defeat of Rā Māṇḍalika by Mahomed Begadā, which clashes with Mr. Munshi's theory. He in his turn advances the possibility of the Rā Māṇḍalik of Narasinha's time being a different person from the one defeated by Mahomed Begadā.

Munshi's view vigourously opposed by Ambālāl Jānī and others, on historical grounds.

By the courtesy of Mr. Naṭavarlal I. Desai of the Gujarati Press I have seen advance sheets of *Parvatākhyāna* which is being printed there. Under *Adhyāya* II thereof is given a geneological tree beginning with Purushottamadas, grandfather of Narasinha Mehta

Evidence of a geneological tree given in *Parvatākhyāna*.

coming down to Trikamdas, the author of *Parvata-Pachīśi*, whose proved date is—birth V.S. 1790, death V.S. 1855. The birth of Parvatadās (paternal uncle of Narasinha Mehtā) is entered in this tree as probably V.S. 1433 and Narasinha Mehta is shown as born in V.S. 1469.

There are ten pedigrees from Trikamdas back to Parvatadās. If we take 30 years as the average period for each step in this and work backwards from the known birth date of Trikamdās, we shall get 1790 minus 300=1490 V. S. as the birth-date of Parvatadās, i.e, 57 years later than the conjectural date assigned in the tree. If this calculation is accepted, the date of Narasinha Mehta will have to be shifted about half a century later than that accepted by the orthodox theory. However, the period of 30 years for a pedigree is after all an arbitrary basis, and the greater the number of intervening pedigrees, the greater are the chances of error due to the factors of accidents and uncertainty. [I do not question the genuineness of the geneological tree; but the *avatānka* of Paṇḍyā, given against Purushottamadās, the first name in the tree, is a little puzzling, for Paṇḍyā cannot be the suruame of a ગુજરાત Nāgara. Of course in those *early* years there was no sharp distinction of ગુજરાત and ભિજ્જી so far as intermarriage was concerned. Still one wishes for more light.]

We need not go into the merits of this heated controversy. But the position taken by Prof. Ānandaśankara remains unshaken, resting as it does on the basis of apparently sound and sober reasoning.

However, I must not pass over in a hurry the line of reasoning adopted by Durgāśankara K. Śāstrī's criticism on this question of Narasinha Mehta's date. Durgāśankara K. Śāstrī in his extremely lucid and able article entitled नरसिंह महेताना डायडानो विचार.¹⁶ He differs from Prof. Anandaśankara and tries to establish, on independent evidence, that, after all,

Narasinha Mehta need not be taken to have borrowed the names of Rādhā's ॐs from the cult of Chaitanya; he advances the possibility of influences other than that of Chaitanya's followers, arguing that Chaitanya's creed was not akin to the Vaiṣṇavism of Narasinha. These other influences, according to the Śāstrī, were those of the numerous saintly devotees of the Vaiṣṇava cult who were well-known persons before and in Narasinha Mehta's time. I cannot examine Durgāśankara Śāstrī's arguments in detail here, but I shall simply state that although they are not to be lightly set aside, there is something wanting in them to complete their logic and convince me at once (x)

16. See Prasthāna, V.S. 1983, Vaiśakha and Jyeshtha.

(x) Since the above was completed there has appeared the promised work, Trīkamadāsa ān Kāvya ane Charitra. It embodies an exhaustive and elaborated examination of the riddle of Narasinha's date in the light of some new data furnished in the poems embodied in the book. But they present such a bewildering mass of conflicting matter the value whereof is further discounted by attaching historical importance to mythical or miraculous incidents vitiating the very chronology connected with them, that the question cannot be regarded as finally settled by such arguments. Besides this, some of the statements in the book have been challenged in a review of the book in the Buddhi-prakāśa in a manner which reduces the authorative value of the work. We must therefore leave the whole question where it was.

To take up now the picture of the times. Long

A Picture of Narasinha's times:— Dual religious stream S'iva worship and Kṛishṇa worship.

before Narasinha Mehta's times the religious current in India was flowing in two main streams,— S'iva-worship and Kṛishṇa-worship. During their early period the two streams flowed without mutual

antagonism. In fact, rulers who followed the Śaiva cult called themselves *Parama Bhagavatas* also. Somehow or other, during later periods and surely in Narasinha Mehta's time the two cults were markedly inimical towards each other. The story of the persecution of Narasinha Mehta by the Śaiva Sanyāsīs with the help of the ruler of Junāgaḍha, Ra' Māṇḍalika, based on mere tradition though it is, seems to have some

historical substratum of fact below it, the miraculous element of Kṛishṇa having placed the garland on Narasinha Mehtā's neck from above in the sky being an embellishment to enhance the value of Kṛishṇa-worship. The essential fact is that in his times Kṛishṇa-worship had flourished in spite of opposition from the followers of the Śaiva cult. On the social side also we find that caste, with its tyrannic domination was a factor of great power even in

these early times, though the weapon of excommunication had not played a prominent part, violent ridicule serving the purpose equally.

Social tyranny in Narasinha's time.

Whether the social institutions of custom like *भामेदु*,—

પહેરામણી caste-dinners as known at present, were in full force, or in an embryonic stage in those days, and whether the incidents connected therewith as related in the poems on the subject by Premānanda and his predecessors, are not ornamental superimpositions of poetic imagination, are questions worth investigation, if investigation is possible in the absence of historical data. The picture of the period presented to us shows that the ideals of Kṛishṇa-worship, and religious ideals all round, as also the rigidity of social institutions formed essential features of the life of the people. We know the harassment and malicious slander to which Narasinha Mehtā was subjected, as also his quiet defiance of caste. No wonder then, that he says in the concluding ૫૬ of *Surata Sangrāma*:

વસવા વાસ નહીં; સાધન પાસ નહીં, કૃષ્ણનો દાસ થઈ ઉઘટે ભણવું;
નાગરવટ નહીં, કંઈ ખટખટ નહીં, એક ધરી હઠ હરિગાન કરવું.

Another important fact in connection with religious life and Kṛishṇa-worship in those days must be noticed. The cult of Vallabha's Vaishṇavism, with its latter day dissolute ideas and slackness of morality, could not have been an influence in Narasinha's time. For Vallabhāchārya was born in A. D. 1479,^V whereas Narasinha's life and activity had ceased then. Narasinha's Kṛishṇa-worship was therefore, derived

(V)

Even if we move Narasinha's date about 50 years later, the above contention holds good, in view of the consideration that Vallabha's doctrines and creed could not have been promulgated full-shaped so soon after his birth as to materially influence Narasinha.

from the earlier Bhāgavata cult, *Pancha-rātra* and the like; whereas the erotic side of Narasinha Mehtā's works must be traced to Jayadeva's poetry and the *Daśama Skandha* of *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and connected literature.

With this picture of the back-ground of Narasinha Mehta and his times, we can now dip into his literary work. To take up a prefatory consideration: Did Narasinha imbibe any poetic ideas from Jayadeva? Certainly he did. I do not know why Prof. Ānandaśankara Dhruva gives, at first a hesitating reply to this question, although only a few steps later on he haltingly accepts Narasinha's debt to Jayadeva. He says:

“ઐપદેવથી પહેલાં પણ શ્રીમદ્ ભાગવત તેમજ રામાયણ માહાભારત અને હરિવંશ ગુજરાતમાં જાણીતાં હતાં, એટલુંજ નહિ પણ કૃષ્ણ અને રાધાની લીલા પણ પ્રસિદ્ધ હતી. આ બારમા શતકને આરંભે થયેલા જયદેવની અસર હોય વા ન હોય પણ ઐપદેવની અસર તો નહિજ એમાં શંકા નથી. વળી આ¹⁷ ઊતારા ધ્યાનમાં લેતાં નરસિંહ મહેતા ઉપર સાક્ષાત્ જયદેવની અસર માનવાને પણ કારણ રહેતું નથી; પણ જયદેવનો નરસિંહ મહેતાએ ખાસ ઉલ્લેખ કર્યો છે તેથી તેમ જ નરસિંહ મહેતાના જીવનચરિત્રમાં સાધુઓની

17. Stanzas quoted by him from *Surathotsava* of *Somes'vara*, his *Kīrti--Kaumudī* and from *Kāvyañus'āsana* of *Hemachandra*.

અસરનો નિર્દેશ લેઈએ છીએ. તેથી જયદેવની અસરનો નિષેધ કરવો અશક્ય છે.”¹⁸

His statements in this extract are:

- (1) Jayadeva who flourished in the beginning of the 12th Century may or may not have influenced Narasinha Mehta;
- (2) There are no reasons to believe that Narasinha Mehta had a direct influence from Jayadeva;
- (3) Narasinha Mehta has mentioned Jayadeva specifically; therefore.
- (4) It is impossible to deny the influence of Jayadeva (on Narasinha Mehta).

These broad conclusions present a certain natural conflict, especial between (2) and (4) unless shelter be taken under the word 'direct' in (2). But I am confronted with a still more bewildering conflict when I find that Prof. Dhruva has categorically proved the influence of Jayadeva on Narasinha in the first instalment of his article in a issue of *Vasanta* just preceding this one. Here are his words:

18, His article, *Narasinha and Mira*, in 'Vasanta' Bhādrapada, 1961.

“નરસિંહ મહેતામાં જયદેવ, કબીર અને શંકરાચાર્યની અને કદાચ ચૈતન્યની (?) અસર સ્પષ્ટ નજરે પડે છે.”

He supports this statement by quoting from ‘Surata-Sangrāma’ the lines which represent Jayadeva as the peace-negotiator between Kṛishṇa and Rādhā. He adds further that several poems of Narasinha appear to have their plots inspired or suggested by Jayadeva’s “*Gīta Govinda*” and after a thoughtful argument excluding the possibility of their being derived from the *Bhāgavata*, he concludes :

“એટલે નરસિંહ મહેતામાં શુદ્ધ ભાગવતની અસર માનવી તે કરતાં જયદેવની અસર માનવી એ અમને વધારે યોગ્ય લાગે છે.”

(*Vasanta*, Śrāvāṇa, 1961 ; pp. 244-5).

Instances from Narasinha’s poems indicating clear influence of Jayadeva.

Well, I shall give unmistakable instances from Narasinha Mehta’s poems which prove Narasinha’s debt to Jayadeva. Here they are :

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19. This indicates a version of the story different from what we know now. Jayadeva did not lose his wife while singing songs in worship of Kṛishṇa, as stated here, but Jayadeva’s wife dropped in a swoon and was on the point of death on hearing a false rumour that Jayadeva was dead; and then Jayadeva took up his vīṇā and sang a particular અષ્ટપદી, and his singing brought her back to life.

(a) સર્વે નીચું ઘણું, હા ન કોઈ કણું, ઊડિયો જયદેવો સમય લેઈ,
નરસૈયો ભણે, ઊડિયો મુદિત મને, કૃષ્ણ ભજતાં જોણે નાર ખોઈ.
('સુરતસંયામ,' પદ ૨૩, કડી છેલ્લી).

(b) ઊડીને આવિયો, સર્વને લાવિયો, વિષ્ટિયે જવ તમે જયદેવો,
ઉન્મત્ત આહીરડી, લાલની લાડલી, વિકટ બહુ એહની વિષ્ટિ સેવા.
('સુરતસંયામ' પદ ૨૪, કડી પહેલી).

(And also in other places in the same poem).

These instances contain a simple mention of Jayadeva and may not therefore prove the influence of Jayadeva on Narasinha's poetry; they merely show that Narasinha was aware of Jayadeva's name. He must, however, have been acquainted with his poetical work. For we find him say further:

(c) એક જાણોછો વ્રજની ગોપી કે રસ જયદેવે પીયો રે,
ભગતો રસ અવની ઢળતો, નરસૈયે તાણીને લીયો રે.
('શૃંગારમાળા,' પદ ૭, કડી છેલ્લી).

The statement that Jayadeva drunk at the fountain of true knowledge of Kṛishṇa through the medium of love, surely allude to Jayadeva's great song, the *Gīta Govinda*. And, if we may be permitted to see a hidden meaning in the second line of this couplet, we may infer that Narasinha Mehta drew his inspiration from that great song.

(d) સોળ કળાનો શશિયર ઉડગણ સહિત બ્રહ્માણ્ડ ભમે,
ધીર સમીરે જમના તીરે, ત્રિવિધ તનના તાપ સમે.
("રાસસહસ્રપદી," પદ ૯૧, કડી ત્રીજી).

We see here a distinct importation from the *Gita Govinda* in the expression धीर समीरे यमुनातीरे which forms the beginning of the refrain in the second *Aṣṭapadi* of the Fifth Canto. This small bit of evidence is fairly conclusive.

Let us go further to a still better piece of evidence:

(e) કંઠે બાંહે ગ્રહી સનમુખ ગુણ ઉચરે: તુમસિ મમ જીવન ધમ નાથ બોલે;

તુમસિ શૃંગાર ઉરહાર મમ ભૂષણ, તુમસિ મમ મગન ચિતસંગ ડોલે.

('શૃંગારમાળા', પદ ૩૫૬, કડી બીજ).

Here we hear a distinct echo of त्वमसि मम भूषणं त्वमसि मम जीवनं त्वमसि मम भवजलधिरत्नम् ।

the well-known line in the Tenth Canto of *Gīta-Govinda*.

I do not suppose any further evidence is needed. True, these are stray instances of stray expressions. Nevertheless they show that Nara-sinha Mehta had a close familiarity with Jayadeva's poetry and he could not then remain uninfluenced by him in a general way. We may note by way of supplement that the earlier portion of ચાતુરી પેઠશી is a poor imitation of the plot of *Gita-Govinda*, Krishna Radha and Lalita being the characters taking part in

the primary love quarrel, subsequent reconciliation, and final amorous dalliance of the two lovers..²⁰

There are two incidental items of internal evidence on the subject of external influence on Narasinha Mehta: not on his poetry exactly, but, in the one case on his language and in the other on his religious belief. The one is the presence of the genitive termination *चा* which occurs very frequently in his poems: *नरसैयाये स्वामी* at the end of various pieces. The question is: does this indicate an influence of the Marāthī language, which has *चा* for its genitive termination? The second item is the occasional, though not very frequent, use of the word *विठ्ठल* as a name of Kṛishṇa in Narasinha's poems. This also may raise the question whether Narasinha's was impressed by the worship of Viṭhala which was in vogue in Mahārāshṭra? He may have visited the shrine of Viṭhoba at Paṇḍharpur, it may be argued.

Both these questions are dealt with in an Appendix which I attach to this lecture.

In my next lecture I shall deal with two other questions: (1) the element of the miraculous in Narasinha's life and (2) an appreciation of his poetry.

20, Durgāśankar K. Śāstrī, in his article in *P r a s t h ā n a* alluded to above, has, I find, given instances of Jayadeva's influence on Narasinha, one or two out of which co-incide with those given by me, while others are perhaps not quite tallying, as they contain ideas which could have been conceived by Narasinha independently of Jayadeva's *Gita-Govinda*.

APPENDIX

to

Lecture III

The genitive termination *ચો* (ची-चुं) figures prominently in Narasinha Mehtā's poems, and it had attracted earlier students of Gujarātī literature as a specialty of that poet. Before considering the connection of this termination with a similar one in Marāṭhī, it will be useful to examine how and in what situation the termination exists in Narasinha's poetry, and whether any other old poets have used it, if so upto what period in Gujarātī literature this termination lasted. Let us take instances,—firstly in Narasinha Mehtā alone:—

(a) નરસૈયાચો સ્વામી માહરો જીવન મરકલ્લડા મને મારે રે.

(*Śṛṅgāra Mālā*, pada 332)

(b) મસ્તક મુગટચો ભાર.

(*Chāturī Chhatrīśī*, 14-3)

(c) માનનીયાંચા મન ડોડાવે.

(*Bāla-līlā*, pada 21-2)

(d) સુંદરીયાંચા સ્વભાવ એવા પીયુજ વિના ન સોહાયે.

(*Śṛṅgāra-mālā* pada 128-4)

(e) દધિચ્યુ પાત્ર તે શિરથી ઢાકિયું રે.

(*Chāturī-Chhatrīśī*, 2-7)

(f) કંઠડાચો ભૂષણ સજની, અળગો ન મેઝું દિવસ ને રજની.

(*Śṛṅgāra-mālā*, pada 97)

Instance (a) is a typical one, the position of the ચ termination being in the last line of a piece affixed to the name of the poet : the frequency of this type being prominent. The other cases, viz. ચ termination being placed wltth other words anywhere inside the poem are comparatively rare.

Now for instances in other poets :

Vasanta-vilāsa (V. S. 1508).

(g) ચંદન ચંદ્યું મીત (stanza 18).

(h) આંકુડી મયણ્યી જાણી (stanza 34).

Kānhaḍade Prabandha (V. S. 1512).

(i) તેહ્યા પ્રેમ અપાર (III-234).

Sitā-haraṇa (V. S. 1526.)

(j) પહેલું તણ્યું નામ (St. at the beginning).

Vimala-Prabandha (V. S. 1568).

(k) પુરે મનચી આસ (I-19).

(l) કલ્પવૃક્ષ કુસુમાંચી માલ (I-50).

(m) મુનિ લાવણ્યસમયચી વાણી (I-95).

(Same at the close of each *Khaṇḍa*, nine *Khandas* in all).

Bhramara-Gītā by Brahadeva (V. S. 1609).

(n) જે ચે!ગીયાંચી ધ્યાને નાવે તે કૃષ્ણ પ્રીતે વ્રજ વસ્યા,

It will be seen that instance (n) is of the type of instance (a) ; also that this termination covers a period beginning with Narasinha Mehta and running through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and early part of seventeenth century. After that it seems to have disappeared, and only peeps out later on in the seventeenth century in rare cases : e. g.

Nala-Damayanti-Rāsa of Nayasundara (V. S. 1665) has

() ચઘપિ કેવલ તુલ્યચે કામ સા દયિતા હુ છંડુ' સ્વામ (VI-73).

Also the same author's *Rūpachanda Kūvara-Rāsa* (V. S. 1637) shows the following :

(p) તે તુમચી કરશે બહુ સેવ (IV Chopāi-27).

(q) તુમ પધારો તુમચે કામ (Ibid, Chopāi 35).

(r) અહીં રહે અમચી સ્વામીની રૂપે રંભ સમાન (Ibid, Dūho 5).

(s) પંકજચૂં મુખ પ્રેમદા રે ત્રિકશ્યુ પૂત્રમચંદ.

Silavati-Rāsa : (IV.v-8) V. S. 1700.

Silavati Rāsa (V. S. 1700) has this ચો termination in frequent use :

(t) મુખ બોલો હે તુમચો અવદાત IV-vii-1.

(u) હું જઈ તુમચે ભામણે VI-xi-1.

- (v) તુમચેા ધર પેડો પચાળ V-i-2.
 (w) તુમચેા બાળક તે હરે VI-ix-2.
 (x) જવ તેા તુમચે ભાગ રે Ibid-3.

It is noteworthy that this ચ termination in all these instances in the later works (except in instance (s) is tacked on to personal pronouns.

This abnormality may, however, be due to the tendency of Jain writers towards adopting old and nearly obsolete forms and words.

A peculiar instance of the absorption of this ચ termination on lines identical with the ત termination is found in converting ટું to ટે for the dative sense ; I find only one instance :

તે કોઈ ધનનો કામ છે તુમચે

(*Silavatī-no-Rāsa*,) VI-viii-2 ; V. S. 1700).

Now, the question that arises from this use covering a period of over two centuries is: whence did this ટે termination find admission into Gujarātī literature? For *prima facie* it is a termination peculiar to Marāṭhī. Before answering this question I must note that the આં before the termination in કુસુમાંચી (inst. l) is but the old Gujarātī neuter gender plural, that in માનનીયાંચી (inst. c) and સુંદરીયાંચી (inst d) is the old feminine plural, and that in યોગીયાંચી (inst. n) is also the plural termination, whether masculine with the *anusvāra* as

redundant or neuter gender (येग्ल्यां being used in contempt). They are not to be mistaken as identical with the current Marāṭhī forms कुसुमांची &ca. which have the *anusvāra* sounded strong while here it is weak in all the words.

Now, my answer. This termination began in the Prākṛita stage: see Si. He. VIII-ii-149 which gives ऐच्चयं as the termination in तुह्येच्चयं-अह्येच्चयं as reflections of यौष्माकं-आस्माकं. Read inside, this rule really yields तुह्ये the word for “you” and अह्ये for “we” to which is added the suffix च्चय (not ऐच्चयं) And Dr. R. G. Bhāṇḍārkar (Lectures p. 257) derives the Marāṭhī चे from Skr. त्यं, originally restricted to words like अत्रत्य, तत्रत्य &ca., but eventually generalised and made applicable to all nouns to indicate possession and other relations. Putting these two factors together I believe that the ए of ऐच्चय is really the final of तुह्ये-अह्ये and the च्चयं is from त्यकम् yielding चे (Marāṭhī). I then further believe that this च termination was the common property of old Gujarātī and Marāṭhī, and that while it disappeared in later Gujarātī, it stuck on and still survives in Modern Marāṭhī. This process is not unknown. Deśya words like परियट्, आइ, लबाड, पुढे (from Skr. पुरः) &c. existed in early Gujarātī, but fell into disuse while they still cling to Marāṭhī (परीट् for परियट् being the evolute). We need not therefore see any Marāṭhī influence in this चो termination in Narasinha Mehtā's poems.

If further support is needed for my view, here are instances from *Veli Kisan Rukmaṇī rī* by Prithīrāja Rāthoḍa composed in V. S. 1637-38. The language is Rājasthānī which can hardly be suspected of having borrowed from Marāṭhī :—

(a) बालक ति किरि हंसचौ बालक. (stanza 12)

(b) कुण जानै संगि हु आ केतला ।

देस देसचा देसपति ॥

(c) मन म्रिग चै कारणै मदनची

वागुरि जाणे विसतरण ॥ (stanza 92)

Just what happened to Skr. त्यक् seems to have happened to its Prakrit evolute, च्वय viz. that whereas it was confined to अहे and तुहे in Prakrit, its post-Apabhramśa evolute, चो ची चु was tacked on to nouns as well, as will be seen from the instances given above (नरसैयाये, भुगटये, &c in Nara-sinha, यं दन्यु, भयल्यु, in *Valsanta Vilāsa*, and so forth); though curiously enough, later works specially those of Jain writers adhere to the personal pronoun,—a reversion, as it were, to the Prakrit idiom.

This चो termination assumed the form of जो in Sindhī (e. g. मुहिंजो, mine, मोहनजो, पहिंजो, one's own, असांजो, ours, अब्हांजो, yours). This development furnishes an indication of the independent position of Nara-sinha Mehta's चो.



APPENDIX B

Viṭṭhala in Narasinha Mehtā's Poetry.

We must go into the history of this term and into the Vaiṣṇava phase marked by Viṭṭhala-worship. I shall draw upon Dr. Sir R. G. Bhāṇḍārkar's valuable and monumental work on 'Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism'.²

(a) વાહલા હાથ વિઠ્ઠલ શ્રી કહું વાણીજ ?

(Chāturī-Chhatrīśī, XXI)

(b) ભક્તિવશ વિઠ્ઠલ (Sudāmā-Charita, Pada IV).

Here are two representative specimens, (a) in a love-poem (b) in a devotional one. Is the name Viṭṭhala really appropriate in a love-poem? A scrutiny of the name and its historical associations will show the incompatibility.

To begin with *Viṭṭhala* is not a Sanskrit name. Skr. विष्णु was corrupted into વિઠ્ઠલ in Kanarese (cf. कृष्ण. Skr. Kuṣṭha. Kuṭṭha, Kittī or Kiṣṭha in Kanarese). Thus, this deity had its origin in the South, further South. When the shrine of Viṭṭhala was established cannot, be ascertained. But there is clear evidence of

2. "Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and minor Religious Systems"
—Encyclopoedia of Indo-Aryan Research, Vol. III, Part 6,
pp. 87-88.

its being in existence in *the middle of the thirteenth century A. D.* A stone inscription at Paṇḍharpur dated 1192 Śāke=1270 A. D. mentions Viṭṭhala. A copper plate inscription of the reign of Kṛṣṇa of the Yādava dynasty of Devagiri states that one, Malliśettī made a grant of a village at Paundarīka Kṣetra on the Bhāgīrathī near the God Viṣṇu in Śāke 1171=1249 A. D. This evidently refers to the shrine of Viṭhoba at Paṇḍharpur.

So much for chronology connected with Viṭṭhala, the shrine-god at Paṇḍharpur. Now about a legend connected with the worship of Kṛṣṇa in his relation with Rādhā and with Rukminī, which has a significance of its own in the history of the creed as represented in two different areas and among two different people. The legend runs thus in brief: Kṛṣṇa went out from Dvārikā in search of Rādhā; she appeared suddenly and sat in his lap; at this juncture Rukminī came up, but Rādhā did not rise from Kṛṣṇa's lap. Incensed at this, Rukminī fled to Dindīra-vana and ruled at the site of modern Paṇḍharpur. Kṛṣṇa went there and propitiated Rukminī. The historical significance of this legend is that Kṛṣṇa-worship, which, in its original stages of Pancharātra and Bhāgavata, was unconnected with any woman, got later on associated with Rādhā as his consort in the north, i. e. in the systems of Nimbārka, Vallabha and Chaitanya; while Rukminī, Kṛṣṇa's lawful wife was united with Kṛṣṇa in the south—the Marāṭhā country.

Vithoba, in the Marāṭhā country, is almost exclusively spoken of as Rukminī-pati or Rukminī-vara and not as Rādhā-Vallabha, the lover (or beloved) of Rādhā. As a result, the Marāṭhā Vaiṣṇavism is more sober and purer than that of the three systems named above. (Rāhī, the Marāṭhī form of Rādhikā has an insignificant place assigned to her in Mahārāṣṭra.) The sports of Kṛiṣṇa in Gokula are also represented occasionally in the mode of worship, but very little importance is attached to them.

The literature in Marāṭhī which has Viṭhobā for its centre belongs to saints of the Śūdra class like Nāmadeva and Tukārāma, and it is entirely untinged by the erotic aspect and is pure and purely devotional.

We have therefore to fall upon the theory that, although Narasinha Mehta may have been in direct or indirect touch with Viṭhobā of Pandharpur, the use of the name, Viṭṭhala, in his erotic songs is an anomaly which can be explained only by assuming that the poet uses the term in an indifferent way, just as a mere synonym of Kṛiṣṇa, like Hari, Govinda and the like, without any special association attaching to the purified, or rather taintless cult of southern Vaiṣṇavism. Viṭṭhala in Narasinha's purely devotional poems may either be such a synonym or an importation from the Southern worship.

It may be noted incidentally that, as we have seen in the discussion on Narasinha's inspiration from

earlier sources like Jayadeva and the Bhāgavata, he could not possibly have been the product of the Northern Vaiṣṇava cult of Vallabha, for Vallabha was born in A. D. 1479, i. e. a long way after Narsinha's poetic career.¹ The phrase પુષ્ટિ મારગ અનુભવ્યો in *Chāturī* 10 of *Chāturī-Chhatrīsī* must therefore be regarded with great suspicion in as much as the doctrine of *Puṣṭi* (i. e. the grace-Anugraha-of God, with its concomitant *Puṣṭi-bhakti* of four kinds, belongs to Vallabha's own religious philosophy. (For a detailed discourse on this see Sir, R. G. Bhāṇḍārakar's 'Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism' pp. 79-80). We must suspect the genuineness of a piece which includes this anachronistic reference. The lines I speak of are these;—

કેટિક કામવિદાસ વિધવિધ, બેહુ સમેવડ શોભી રહ્યાં;
એવો પુષ્ટિમારગ અનુભવ્યો રસ, નરસૈયો હૂતો તિહાં.

The editor of Narsinha Mehta's poems gives in a foot-note the variant reading પ્રેમમાર્ગનો અનુભવ્યો રસ. Could this have been prompted by a desire to wipe off the anachronism? It is not easy to conjecture.

There is, however, another distinct reference to Vallabha and his *Puṣṭi* doctrine, in a piece ascribed to Narasinha Mehta. It is contained in

1. There will be no apparent conflict in consequence of this statement and the possible shifting of Narasinha's date later than the orthodox one; for reasons see Note (V) in this lecture, *supra*.

pada 121—one of Supplementary pieces—at page 533 of *Narasinha Mehtā Kṛita Kāvya Sangraha*. The pertinent lines are as under :—

શ્રી વલ્લભ, શ્રી વિકૃલ, ભૂતજે પ્રગટીને પુષ્ટિમાર્ગ તે વિશદ કરશે,
દૈવી નિજ જીવ જે, શરણ જે આવશે, વિના સાધન ઉદ્ધાર કરશે.

(Stanza 4)

The editor's footnote on this piece (pp. 533-534) is very powerful and significant. I quote pertinent portions therefrom:—

“ ઉપલું પદ નરસિંહ મહેતાની કૃતિ છે એમ મનાવવાનો પ્રયત્ન શ્રીમદ્ વલ્લભાચાર્ય સંપ્રદાયના કેટલાક ગોસાંઈતા બાળકો અને અનેક વૈષ્ણવો કરે છે, હેતુ સ્પષ્ટ છે, કે નરસિંહ મહેતાએ ૧૬ મા શતકના પ્રારંભ પૂર્વે કે તેની લગભગમાં એવું ભવિષ્ય ભાખ્યું હતું કે હવે પછી શ્રીમદ્ વલ્લભાચાર્ય અને તેના દીકરા વિકૃલનાથજી, જેને વૈષ્ણવો ગોસાંઈજી કહે છે, અને પ્રેમલા વૈષ્ણવ જે સાક્ષાત્ પૂર્ણ પુરુષોત્તમનું સ્વરૂપ કહે છે, તે જન્મ લેશે, અને પુષ્ટિમાર્ગને પ્રવર્તાવશે. પદની ભાષા, વસ્તુ, વિચાર જોતાં એ પદની ૪ થી કડી કૃત્રિમ છે, એ કહેવાની જરૂર નથી. વૈષ્ણવો કહે છે કે નરસૈયો પુષ્ટિમાર્ગનો બધૈયો—વધામણી આપનારો—હતો, અને નરસિંહ મહેતાએ શ્રી વલ્લભાચાર્ય જે બોધ કરવાના હતા, તે પ્રથમ જણાવવાને જ જન્મ લીધો હતો ! આના જેવો ઉડાંગ દોહડો, હું ધારું છું કે, કોઈપણ સંપ્રદાય કે પંથમાં નહિ હશે. નરસિંહ મહેતાનાં કાવ્યો, પદો જેટલાં જેટલાં જૂના ચોપડામાંથી ઉતાર્યાં છે, તેમાં ક્યાંક એ પદ દષ્ટે પર્યું નથી. પણ અદારમી સદીના લખાયેલા વલ્લભ સંપ્રદાયના ચોપડામાંથી જ માત્ર આ પદ મળી આવ્યું છે. * * * * * આ પદની

ર જ ને ૩ જ કડીમાં શ્રી વલ્લભાચાર્યનો બ્રહ્મ સંબંધી જે મંત્ર છે તેનો ભાવ સમાવ્યો છે ! આ મંત્ર સર્વમાન્ય કે વેદોક્ત મંત્ર નથી. તેના મંત્રનો પ્રવર્તક અમુક યશો એમ વૈષ્ણવો કહે એ તેમના પ્રેમના પાણીનો છાળ અથવા મૂર્ખતા જ છે ! ”

Stronger language than that used in the words put in black type by me is not needed to condemn the fabrication of evidence seen in this piece, put forward to prove a prophetic utterance by Narasinha.

We are, however, not strictly concerned with this incidental point. We have seen enough about the name and historical atmosphere of Vitṭhala to explain the presence of this word in Narasinha's poems, erotic and devotional, in the manner stated above.

LECTURE IV

NARASINHA MEHTA.

The Miracles in his Life. An estimation of his poetry.

In my last lecture I glanced at the picture of the poet and his times, and inquired into the influence on his poetry of literature and religious ideals which preceded him and surrounded him. In this lecture I propose to touch the incidents in his life which savour of the miraculous, and then finish up with an estimation of his poetry.

Miracles in Narasinha's life: Alleged presence of the poet at the *Rāsa* and other sports of Krishna and the Gopis: a poetic fiction. Well, to take up the first part of the theme of this lecture, we saw that in his poem *Surata-Sangrāma* Narasinha Mehta, along with Jayadeva, figures as a character, though a minor one. We see him taking part in the incidents; he even transforms himself into a member of the opposite sex and figures as a *દુતી* on behalf of *Rādhā*.²¹ This is really but a sort of poetic fiction created by the highly-strung religious imagination of the poet. The poet exercises this privilege of claiming first-hand knowledge of incidents in the life of Krishna in many other places. Thus:

સુંદરી પામી અતિ ઉલ્હાસ જ કરતાં કામરસભોગવિલાસ જ;
વિલસાવવા બેહુ વાસ જ હૂતો નરસૈયો પાસ જ.

૨૧. કમળ કરે લખી, જોઈ નરસંઘ સખી, પત્રિકા લઈ હવે કુલ જાએ”
(સુરતસંગ્રામ, પદ ૧૧, પં. છેલ્લી.)

પાસ રહીને નયન નિરખ્યો અનુભવ રસ થયો જેહ;
જેવી લીલા નજરે દીઠી મુખડે ગાઈ તેહ.

(આતુરીપોડશી, પદ ૬ મું. પં. ૧-૪)

We may similarly account for the poet's claim that he was the torch-bearer when Kṛishṇa was dancing the *Rāsa* dalliance with the Gopīs. [In very recent times a Gujarātī devotee of the Rāmānuja cult describes himself as watering the ખસટ્ટી outside the bed-chamber of Rāma:

“દાસ અનન્ત બિભો તહિ કાંઈ ટટ્ટી છાંટે”

almost in imitation of Narasinha's imaginative state-
ment]. But how shall we explain
More realistic miracles connected with Narasinha's life-incidents: their explanation.
the various miracles connected with Narsinha Mehta's life? Take, for instance, the most prominent among these; viz., Narasinha Mehta's personal witnessing of the *Rāsa-Līlā* of Kṛishṇa to which the God, Śiva, himself escorted the poet. Several explanations have been offered. The most naïve and simple one comes from Haragovindadāsa D. Kāntāvālā, who suggests that in the light of “new discoveries” such miracles

In another place the poet says;

“નરસંઘ્યાંતું પુરુષપાણું રે જાણ્યું ગયું તેણી વેળા રે”

(રાસસહસ્રપદી પદ ૧૬, પં. છેલ્લી.)

are not impossible. By Yoga performances and full faith in God such things can happen. He cites Madame Blavatsky's theosophical creed and miracles, which, he states, have converted many persons. ²² No comment is needed on this view of a credulous mind pinning its faith on the stories of dupes. Why, even a few years back—only three or four years back—people started incredible stories of miracles with Mahātmā Gāndhīji as the central figure. Canons of sound and sane criticism will not allow us to agree with Hargovindadāsa Kāṇṭāvālā in this matter.

We must fall back upon the theory of poetic fiction supported by highly strung religious imagination. And we have for this view a suggestive clue in Narasinha Mehta's writings furnishing a basis for it; he speaks with regard to the very incident of રાસલીલાદર્શન in these terms :

“શ્રી વૃંદાવન જમુનાતીરે બંસીબટે રસ જામિયો
પ્રેમે પીયા રાસ રમિયા, ત્યાં નરસૈયો ઝૂંપી રહ્યો ²³

x x x x

x x x

પાસ રહીને નયન નિરખ્યો અનુભવ રસ થયો જેહ;
જેવી લીલા નજરે દીઠી મુખડે તે ગાઈ તેહ.

22. Preface to the Gujarātī Press edition of Narasinha Mehta's works; Page 47, Para 2.

23. ચાતુરીબોડશી પદ ૮ મું પંક્તિ છેક્લી બે.

દીવી તે મહારે હાથ દીધી, કહે નરસૈયો આધિન (? સાંનિધ્ય) જોઈ,
 વિલાસ ગોકુલનાથનો ભૂતળ ગાયો સોઈ;
 બલ અધિક કરી કરુણા ! (? કરમાં) આપિયો કરતાલ;
 હું સુખે લાગું ગાન કરવા, પ્રસન્ન થયા ગોપાલ.
 ભામનીમાં ભળી ગયો જેમ સાગરમાં રતન;
 મહારસમાં ઝીલિયો, આનન્દ પામ્યો મન.
 ભાવ જણાવ્યો નયનમાં, બિપજ્યો મનમા નેહ;
 માનુનીને રૂડી મનાવી, દૂતી થઈ તેહ.
 જે રસ શંકર કોઈ દિન દેખે, હું ઝીલી રહ્યો તે માંહે;
 મહારસમાં મહાલિયો. તે શંભુ કેરી સાહે.
 દુપા હવી ભોળાનાથની, તેણે દીધી તે મુજને આશ;
 રંકને રિધિપત કીધલો, કાપ્યો તે ભવનો પાશ.
 અનાથ હુને સનાથ કીધો પાર્વતીને નાથ;
 દિવ્યચક્ષુ આપ્યાં મુજને, મસ્તક મેલ્યો હાથ.
 તેના તે ચરણ પ્રતાપથી પામ્યો તે પ્રેમનિધાન;
 પછી ગોપેશ્વરનાથનું અવનીયેં શું કરું ગાન ?

(ચાતુરીષોડશી, પદ ૯ મું.)

The clue I mean for the vision presented before
 the poet's mind as described above is
 in the single expression "દિવ્યચક્ષુ આપ્યાં
 મુજને." This sets all doubt at rest.
 The રાસલીલા and other incidents
 were witnessed not materially
 with Narasinha Mehta's material eyes, but with the

દિવ્ય ચક્ષુ

as the means for
the vision.

[दिव्य (spiritual) eye of the poet, just as Arjuna saw the विराट् स्वरूप after Kṛishṇa said :—

न तु मां शक्यसे द्रष्टुमनेनैव स्वचक्षुषा ।
 दिव्य ददामि ते चक्षुः पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ॥

Thus our poet had this vision, wherein he took an active part himself, although a subordinate part, probably in the course of a religious trance. This furnishes a fair solution of the miracle.^D

What was the substratum for this vision? Psychology of dreams : Substratum of facts perceived in actual life. Difficult as is the psychology of dreams, there are certain well-known features in the composition of dreams. One of them is that incidents actually witnessed, experience undergone in

(d) Dnyārāma who came centuries after Narasinha and who was steeped in orthodox Vaisṇavism of the Vallabha school has a significant expression in a Marāthī poem of his :—

पहावे भाग्य नरसिंह मेहेताचे, वल्लभ देवाचे ।
 जीर्णा गढ वासी विप्र जाति, नागराची ज्ञाति ।
 भेटिले भगवंत अदमुत भांती, अखिल विश्व ख्याति ।
 रास पाहिला प्रत्यक्ष हरिचा घेउनि दीपिकाबल प्रेमाचे ॥

पाहावे. ॥

real life, go to build up dreams, fantastically or otherwise, along with other factors, such as unfulfilled wishes, cravings of the soul for the unattainable, and so forth. And dreams and trance-visions are kindered phenomena. Both are made of similar stuffs. What, then, were the components of this trance-vision of Narasinha Mehta?

Professor Ānandśankara Dhruva presents a hypothesis based on certain well known facts.

Professor Ānandśankara Dhruva supplies an ingenious answer to this question, which furnishes a very acceptable solution to this miracle. It is this: A play, named विदग्धमाधव written by Rupa-

deva Gosvāmī (mentioned in my last lecture) has the following speech put into the mouth of the Sūtradhāra in its *prastāvanā* or prologue:

“The God, śiva, has in my dream directed me that people following the cult of aesthetic taste attracted by the Love-Worship of Kṛiṣṇa have assembled here at the bank of Keṣi-tīrtha, arriving from various provinces; here on the bank of the Jumna river there was performed the vigorous Rāsa dance.”

Here he represents Narasinha as having personally witnessed the Rāsā of Kṛiṣṇa *with the aid of the torch of Love*. This torch of Love, obviously, is another form of the दिव्य चक्षु mentioned in Narasinha's ચાતુરી યોડશી line given above. It does not get nullified in its force by the word પ્રત્યક્ષ in the very same line, as this word can be interpreted as પ્રત્યક્ષવત્ and therefore rendered by the term “personally”. Of course, Dayārāma goes on to other miracles in Narasinha's life which cannot be explained by metaphorical interpretation. These latter retained their material nature, while the spiritual significance of the રાસ દર્શન still clung on through the march of tradition, which was crystallized in terms like પ્રેમ-દીપિકા and the like.

Now, Chaitanya had introduced the custom of singing and performing *Rāsa Līlās* and it is probable that the followers of Chaitanya were performing this or similar other plays in different provinces, and that Narasinha witnessed such a performance of human *Rāsa Līlā* at Dvārikā in such a play, which stimulated in Narasinha an inspiration of the spiritual *Rāsa Līlā* witnessed by him with his spiritual vision. The God, Śiva, who directed the *Sūtradhāra* to perform the play is stated by the commentator to be Gopīśvara Mahādeva. This Gopīśvara may possibly be the earlier name of Gopanātha to whom Narasinha went and who showed him the *Rāsa-Līlā* of Kṛishṇa.^N

(N)

In the recently published *ત્રીકમદાસનાં કાવ્યો અને ચરિત્ર* in Appendix II at page 245 there is a letter from an overzealous person who thinks that Principal Dhruva and persons reared up in materialistic atmosphere will not be able to swallow miracles like the *actual* vision of Kṛishṇa by Narasinha, and this gentleman honestly believes that Nārasinha saw with his human eyes, in Krishna's *Rāsa*, the *sakhīs*, -Lalitā and others—and he therefore mentioned them by name in the very description of that *Rāsa*. The editor of the book (at p.271, Appendix IV) similarly, but in a single significant expression, removes the difficulty of searching for the source of the names of these *sakhīs* by pinning his faith on Narasinha Mehta's statement based on *personal experience* (સ્વાનુભવયુક્ત કથન). To such uncritical "critics" no rational answer can be given. The significant suggestion of *દિવ્યચક્ષુ* in Narasinha's statement and in *પ્રેમાંચે દીપિકાબલ* in Dayā-rāma's Marāṭhī poem can have no critical appeal for such persons.

I need not spend time on other miracles; if the whole body of Nāgara caste-people was hypnotized, when the members saw Dheds sitting at dinner between each one of them, all I say is that such stories are oftener born, long after the hero has passed away, of the

Other miracles :
their origin in
the imagination
of admiring
followers.

idle imagination of the admiring followers. For the rest, the mention of Narasinha Mehta frequently taking part in the Rāsa performance, I have already put it down to a sort of poetic fiction. Such fiction serves a secret aesthetic purpose. Thus, for instance, when the poet transforms himself into a girl friend of Rādhā, and says:

સખીરૂપે નરસૈયો નિરખે તે કૃષ્ણજનો વિહાર ૨૪

the new position removes all cause for a feeling of delicacy (શ્રીલક્ષ્મી) connected with witnessing the amours of a person to whom reverent worship only is due.

Some speci-
mens of Nara-
sinha Mehta's
poetry examin-
ed.

It is high time now that we examined select specimens of Narasinha Mehta's poetry. We can only select a few now. Here is one :—

(1)

૨૫આ જોની આ કેનું પગલું, પગલે પદ તણું એંધાણ;
પગલાં પાસે ખીનું પગલું, તે રે સોહાગણ નૌતમ જણ.—૧

24. *Chaturī-Chhatrīsī*, XXXII.10

25. *Rasa-Sahasrapadī* 53.

પૂરણ ભાગ્ય તે જીવતી કેરું જે ગઈ બહાવાને સંગે;
 એકલડી અધરરસ પીશે રજની તે રમશે રંગે.—૨
 અડવડતી આખડતી ચાલે, દેહદશા ગઈ ભૂલી;
 નિશ્ચે હરિ આવ્યા આ વનમાં, જો, જો, કમોદની ધૂલી.—૩
 પૂછે કુંજ લતા દુમ વેલી ક્યંઈ દીઠડો નંદકુમાર;
 વૃક્ષ તણી શાખા ધૂલી રહી, અભિષેક કીધો નિરધાર.—૪
 નયણે નીર ને પંથ નિહાળે, કહાન કહાન મુખ ખોલે બાળ;
 ચાલી ચતુરી સરવ મળીને વનમાં ખોળે નંદનો લાલ.—૫
 જોતાં જોતાં વનમાં આવ્યાં, દીઠી એક સાહેલી:
 ધૂતારાનાં લક્ષણ જોજો, ગયો એકલડી મેલી.—૬
 ન દીઠા નાથ, ગોપી પાછાં આવ્યાં. જળ જમુનાને તીર;
 બાળલીલા કીધી તે વારે, પ્રગટ્યા હલધરવીર.—૭
 રાસ આરંભ્યો સર્વ શ્યામા મળી, સુરી નર ‘જો જો’ કીધો;
 ગોપીમાં હૂતો નરસૈયો, પ્રેમસુધારસ પીધો.—૮

Here is a picture, beautiful in its simplicity and grace, tenderness of feeling and delicacy of grief. Kṛishṇa has playfully disappeared from the Gopīs who are looking for him in vain, are jealous of the rival girl whose foot-prints are visible along with those of Kṛishṇa. They wander, tears in their eyes, searching for him and questioning the trees and bowers about his whereabouts. Kṛishṇa, then, appears before them, and they begin their Rāsa-dance with him. Of course Narasinha, was among the Gopīs. The 1st line of the 3rd verse reminds me, though in a distant way, of Rādhā described in the *Gita Govinda* (Canto, VI 3rd verse) as stumbling at every few

steps, in her journey to meet Kṛishṇa.²⁶ The 2nd line of the same verse presents a subtly charming idea: The Gopīs infer positively that Kṛishṇa must have come to this forest; because the *Kumudinī* has opened its petals; the chain of suggestive ideas (causal as also based on similarity) being-that the *Kumuda* flower opens up on seeing the moon (relation of cause and effect), and Kṛishṇa's face resembled the moon (relation of similarity). Readers of Pre-mānanda (who followed Narasinha over two centuries later) will see in the 4th verse the reflected idea in *Nalākhyāna* where Damayantī, searching for Nala

પૂછે (asks) ઊંચાં દ્રુમને તહારી ગગને ગઈ ડાળ,
તરુપતિ જો મહારી વતી ક્યાંહિ દીસે ભૂપાળ.

If Premanandas's lines are a reflection of Narasinha's, Narasinha in his turn, has certainly taken the idea from *Bhagavata*, X, -30-st. 4 to 13. In fact the passage quoted just now is a free-not a literal-reproduction from *Bhāgavata* X-30-st. 24 to 39.²⁷

(2)

જેવો ને તેવો રે તમારે પાલવડે બાંધો;
અણુછતો હું તો તમારો વધાવી લીધો.

26. ત્વદભિસરણરમસેન વલન્તી ।
 પતતિ પદાનિ કિયન્તિ ચલન્તી ॥

“હોંસ ધરી ઉર પ્રભુને મળવા
ડગ ભરી બળથી પડે ઢળી અબળા”

(K, H, Dhruva's Translation: 1st Edition.)

27. Here are some stanzas out of them:—

અણતેડાયો આવુંરે, હુંતો તાણ્યો નવ તૂડું;
 તમારા પ્રેમની સાંકળીએ બાંધ્યો, છોડ્યો નવ છૂડું.
 રમાડ્યો રમું રે, તમારો જમાડ્યો જમું;
 તમારે સમુંરે સજની ! બીજું નવ અમારે સમું.
 હંકારે આધેરો જાઉં, નમારે દૂંકારે રાચું;
 નરસૈંયો જહાં ગાન કરે ત્યાં પ્રેમ ધરી નાચું.

(ભક્તિજ્ઞાનનાં પદ. પદ ૧૦ મું.)

Is this a piece marking the devotion of the poet towards Kṛishṇa? Or is Kṛishṇa depicted here as offering his love at the feet of Rādhā? The poem is included in ભક્તિજ્ઞાનના પદે by the editor. It is possible to effect a synthesis between the two possibilities by regarding the સજની to whom the effusion is clearly addressed as the symbol of a ભક્ત (devotee). The God moves away, if the angry, સજની

न लक्ष्यन्ते पदान्यत्र तस्या नूनं तृणाङ्कुरैः ।
 खिद्यत्सुजाताङ्घ्रि तलामुन्निन्ये प्रेयसीं प्रियः ॥
 [इमान्यधिकमग्नानि पदानि वहतो वधूम् ।
 गोप्यः पश्यत कृष्णस्य भाराक्रान्तस्य कामिनः ॥]
 This is believed to be a क्षेपक verse.
 अत्रावरोपिता कान्ता पुष्पहेतोर्महात्मना ।
 अत्र प्रसूनावचयः प्रियायै प्रेयसा कृतः ॥
 प्रपदाक्रमणे एते पश्यतासकले पदे ।

and so forth.

utters a word of displeasure, and if insulted, not only does he feel not offended, but feels a delight as if honored by her wrath. (Or, દુકાર may simply mean the singular 2nd personal address as a mark of close familiarity). ભગવાન (God) is said to be ભક્તાધીન i.e, obedient to and at the beck and call of His Devotees. Consequently, he says: I love to dance where Narasinha sings. This last assertion, by substituting નાયુ for તિષ્ઠામિ, goes a step higher than the statement: મદ્ભક્તા યત્ર ગાયન્તિ તત્ર તિષ્ઠામિ નારદ૥

(3)

ધ્યાન ધર, ધ્યાન ધર, નેત્રમાં નાય છે, અંતર ભાળ ની એક સુરતી;
 દેહીમાં દરસશે, પ્રેમથી પરસશે, અજળ અનોપમ અધર મુરતી.
 મોરલીના નાદમાં, શ્રવણના સાદમાં, ઝાંઝરી ઝાલરી ડમક વાળે;
 તાલ મુરદંગ ને ચંગ ઉપમા ઘણી, ભેરીનો નાદ બ્રહ્માણ્ડ ગાળે.
 મન પરસન થશે, કર્યાં કર્મ નાસશે, ભાસશે બ્રહ્મ પ્રજવન વેલી;
 કુંજ લલિતમાં કૃષ્ણ લીલા કરે, નિરખ ની નૌતમ નિત્ય કેલિ.
 સુરતસંચામમાં વિલસે રંગમાં, દરસશે દેહીનું માન મરતાં;
 નરસૈયાયો સ્વામી સર્વસુખ આપશે, કુણ્ઠિત કાપશે ધ્યાન ધરતાં.

(ભક્તિજ્ઞાનનાં પદો; ૫૬ ૫૬ મું.)

Narasinha's piece gives us a modified echo of the idea in this extract from *Bhāgavata*.

In view of this direct reflection of the *Bhāgavata* it is difficult to agree with Professor A. B. Dhruva's statement that it seems more reasonable to believe that Narasinha had an influence from Jayadeva rather than that he got an influence from the *Bhāgavata*. (See his article in "*Vasanta*" Śrāvāṇa 1961, page 283.) The better inference is that Narasinha was indebted to both, Jayadeva as well as the *Bhāgavata*, to the one in some instances, to the other in others.

In this hymn there is visible an unusual combination of the two aspects of God, Formless and Form-imbued. નેત્રમાં નાથ છે, the Lord is visible in man's eye and not only that, the poet asks and entreats us to see inward into our hearts (અંતર બાળ ની); as a result God will appear in man's soul (દેહીમાં દરસશે); thus reminding one of the text : તમાત્મસ્થંયેઽનુપश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां शान्तिः शाश्वती नेतरेषाम्. This is but the method adopted in the contemplative field of mental realization. A better method, however, is indicated when the poet establishes the higher means of Love, the Devout Worshipper's Love, whereby the Inaccessible God can be felt familiarly ; when the poet tells us:

પ્રેમથી પરસશે-અનોપમ અધર મુરતી.

This touch with God does not, however, satisfy the keen devotee. He longs for the blissful state wherein the Ego-sense of the soul slips off at the sight of Kṛiṣṇa's perennial sport, not only in this world, but also in the *Go-Loka* sphere (dear to the Vaishṇava heart), wherein are heard the notes of the flute, the beating of drums of sorts and sonorous bells with which the whole Universe resounds, This alone will secure bliss and annihilation of evil deeds; and yet, how is that to be secured? Not by any earthly and material means, but નરસૈયાયો સ્વામી સર્વ સુખ આપશે દુષ્ટિ કાપશે ધ્યાન ધરતી. Thus the means of contemplation stated at the start (in ધ્યાન ધર ધ્યાન ધર) is once again shown as *the* સિદ્ધાન્ત, true doctrine. In this manner we see no conflict of doctrines, but a real synthesis of જ્ઞાન and ભક્તિ.

The Formless aspect of God behind the Form is indicated in a subtle manner by our poet in a single couplet, rather in one single line thereof. Kṛishṇa has disappeared and the Gopīs, mad with the pangs of separation from their Beloved, are making a fruitless search for him. At this our poet tells us, and also perhaps them:

કૃષ્ણ તો જળીને બેઠો હૃદયાને ઓળે રે,
પ્રગટ્યા નરસૈયાનો નાચ રીઝો માર ભાળે રે.

(*Rāsa-Sahasra-Padi*; pada 95, last two lines).

Kṛishṇa, deceiving the Gopīs, lay concealed behind the curtain (shadow, literally) of their hearts. But the simple-hearted Gopīs are not content. As Dayārām has made them say to Uddhava:

હમારા પ્રભુ અધળે રે, હમારા તો એક સ્થળે,
હમે રીઝો આંદરણે રે, હમે રીઝું ચન્દ્ર મળ્યે.

The God, therefore, pleased with their simple, loving, faith which made them yearn for a God whom they could see and feel in living flesh, appeared before them once more! Here again is a curious Synthesis of the Formlessness and the tangible form of God.

The inward dwelling of God in the heart of the worshipper, or lover Gopī, is presented in a slightly altered turn in શૃંગારમાળા પદ પરંતુ thus :

નહિં મેઘું નંદના વાદ, હૃદયે નહિં મેઘું.

x x x x
 x x x

છા તમે રસિલા, હૃદયકમલમાં વસિલા, હવે કેમ યારો અલગા રે ?

છા બલિયા અમ અબલા ઉપર બળ કરી ક્યાં પલકા રે ?

હેડલો નહિં મેલું.

Kṛishṇa is trying to depart from a Gopī, she holds him by the end of his scarf, and addresses him thus: you are expert in love-affairs ; I have kept you (imprisoned) in my heart ; how can you. then, leave me ? True, you are strong, whither do you wish to flee from me, using your strength on me, a weak woman ?

And these lines will remind you of the couplet from *Munja-Rāsā* (probably) quoted by Hemachandra in the Apabhramśa section of his Grammar (Si. He. VIII-IV-439 ; last illustration) ; it runs thus :

बाह विछोडवि जाहि तुहुं, हउ, तेवँइ के दोसु ।

हिअअछिउ जइ नीसरहि जाणउ मुञ्ज सरोसु ॥

Mṛiṇālavatī says to Munja:

Wrenching off my hand, you are going away ; be it so ; what harm is there in that ? If, seated in my heart, you can walk away therefrom then I would believe you are angry.

Of course, the idea has taken a slight turn in Narasinha Mehta's lines.

And several centuries later Suradāsa is credited with the following legendary verse :

कर छटकाई जातु हौ दुरबल जानी मोहि ।

हिरदयसे जउ जाहुगे मरद बखानौ तोहि ॥

The legend describes a miracle. Suradāsa, being blind, was dictating his verse to his amanuensis. This man having gone out for a while, Krishna came himself and took down the poet's verse. Noticing his inordinate speed, in fact he was writing the poet's thoughts before he uttered them,—Suradāsa caught Krishna by the hand; and as the God was freeing himself from the grasp, the poet uttered this: “knowing that I am weak (because blind) you are walking away disengaging your hand; (but) if you can walk away from my heart, I would then admit that you are a brave man.”²⁸

(4)

શામળિયો ને ઉરનું ભૂખણુ, હૃદયે લીડી રાખુ રે;
 શણગટ વાળી વાળી જોડ, વિને વચન મુખે લાખુ રે.
 સૈજ સમારું પરિમલપૂરણુ, સકલ કરું શણગાર રે;
 દીવડિયો અજવાળી મેલું, પોઠે પ્રાણ-આધાર રે.
 મૃગમદ અંજન નયન સમારું, નાના લાવ જણાવું રે;
 નરસૈયાયા સ્વામીશું રમવા લટકંતી હું આપું રે.

(સંગારમાળા : પદ ૩ જી)

The style of language in this poem is simple and yet not wanting in grace; the sentiment of direct Love-worship (પ્રેમભક્તિ) presents a specimen of

28. “*The Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustan*”. by Sir George Grierson, 1889 A. D. P. 24.

Sir George has quite mistaken the essential meaning of this couplet, and in his translation thereof has added “pretending that thou art but a man; and rendered મરદ by the word “a mortal”!

artless beauty. The simplicity of the style does not prevent the little play on the word ઉર (bosom) wherein Krishna is described as residing in the Gopī's bosom and therefore she wishes to hold him close to her bosom. The picture in the second line has a charm of its own, The Gopī draws over her face her *sāḍī* out of bashfulness and yet she peeps through it at her lover out of a loving curiosity, as also a desire to attract by her beauty, half concealed and half revealed. The Gopī approaching her lover in this charming manner and moving gracefully, presents a picture which, as it were, symbolizes the charm and beauty of the poem itself.

(5)

કાંબળી ઓઢાડો રે કહાન ! મહારી ચૂંદડી ભીંજે :
 નહિ કાં મુને રુદયા ભીડો, અંગ ઉધાડું ધૂંજે, મહારી૦
 સ્નેહ ધરી શામળીઆ ઝહાલા ! રંગભર સાંઘડાં લીંજે ;
 કંઠધરી બાહોલડી રે અધરઅમૃતરસ પીંજે રે, મહારી૦
 અરમરિયો આ મેહુલો વરસે, દાહુર જોરે ટહુકે ;
 નરસૈયાયા સ્વામીના સંગમમાં મેઘ ને વીજ અમુકે રે, મહારી૦

We feel inclined to shut our eyes to the slightly openly erotic touches, one or two, in this little piece, partly because they are not indelicate after all, and partly or rather specially for the sake of the charming and poetic setting in which the picture is placed, each throwing its tender light of charm on the other, the setting and the central figure-group of the picture. The poetic interest is further enhanced by the fact that the incident is not clothed in a narrative or descriptive garb but presented in a partly drama-

tic situation and dialogue ; though the beauty of suggestiveness in the Gopī's appeal to Kṛishṇa to protect her garment and body from the rain by his coarse blanket, is marred a little by her direct request for being folded up in his arms. We have before our very eyes the vivid scene, the shivering shepherd girl, the gently falling shower which soaks her dress—the while frogs are croaking, and we hear their music—and, the loving embrace of Kṛishṇa covering and protecting the Gopī, the picture being lit up by the flashing lightning in the bosom of the rain-cloud. And shall we read a little deeper into the scene and see in the brilliant union of the lightning and the cloud the love-embrace of Kṛishṇa and Gopī ?

I shall drop the curtain here. It will not be raised to feast your eyes or rather shock your sense of propriety by presenting to you specimens from the numerous erotic songs of an extreme and unblushing nature of which our poet is guilty. I may only refer you to particular *padas* in શૃંગારમાળા and ચાતુરીષેડશી²⁹. and you can see for yourself how they offend our modern sense of decorum—I use the word 'modern' of set purpose. The word partly explains Narasinha Mehta's standard and traditional mentality in these matters. And yet the poet is not unconscious of the sanctity of delicacy in such matters. In *pada* 11 of his ચાતુરીષેડશી the poet makes Rādhā say to her સખી (girl-friend) when

29. See *padas* 22, 36, 38, 126, of શૃંગારમાળા and *padas* 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 of ચાતુરીષેડશી.

beginning a recital of her happy dalliance with Kṛishṇa:

જે અનુભવ્યે રસ આજ જ, મુને આવે દાજ જ.
કહેતાં મુજને દાજ આવે.....

Of course she describes the full details over which we have to draw the veil. They are meant to be confidences imparted to her bosom-friend. This is how the poet wishes us to treat the matter.

Yes, we have to judge the poet and this extremely unconventional treatment

The poet is to be judged for his erotic poetry in the light of his antecedent and contemporary atmosphere; Narasinha and Dayārāma contrasted.

of love-matters in the light of his antecedent and contemporary atmosphere, his tradition and his environments. The creed of Vallabhāchārya with its degenerate practical laxity of morals in after generations has nothing to do with this question; for, as we know, Vallabha was born in 1479 A. D.,

just when Narasinha Mehtā's career came to an end. Dayārāma, the poet who flourished only a little over a century ago, has indulged in erotic poetry with Kṛishṇa and the Gopīs as the central figures in a more or less unblushing manner. And yet Narasinha Mehtā's songs in this line leave Dayārāma's far far behind in unlicensed descriptions. None-the-less Narasinha Mehtā seems to rise above the material aspect of the amours of Kṛishṇa. The reason is not far to seek. To Narasinha Mehtā Kṛishṇa and his consorts were far above the human sphere, and even

when he describes their love-sports, he does so as a personal witness of the incidents in a divine sphere of life. He thus invests them with a sanctifying, almost purifying, atmosphere, highly rarified wherein only the true worshipper of Kṛishṇa can live and survive. With Dayārāma it is different. His foot is on the earth even when he tries to go to Kṛishṇa's non-earthly world. Dayārāma does not possess the magical power of purging શૃંગારરસ of its passion-element; he cannot do what Narasinha at least professes to do when he says (in the penultimate stanza of *pada* 28 in his *Govinda Gamana*):

મારગ નવ લલ્લો રે, ત્યારે હા કહી રે, પછી આરંભ્યો ત્યાં રાસ;
જળ યળ લીલા રે, તે હરિયે કરી રે, કાઢ્યો હૃદયથી કામનો વાસ.

Mark this last statement: Passion was banished from the hearts of the Gopīs. He ensouled the body so.

Another circumstance in the case of Narasinha Mehta must be noted in this connection. We know, our classical Sanskrit literature teems with unlicensed treatment of *śṛṅgāra-rasa*, where even the excuse of Kṛishṇa being the hero does not exist. It also indulges in similar unbridled liberties with Kṛishṇa as the hero. Now Dayārāma was far removed from this age and its atmosphere. Narasinha was not. He was nearer Jayadeva than was Dayārāma. No wonder then that he should be tinged, highly tinged, with the methods of treating *śṛṅgāra-rasa* peculiar to the classical Sanskrit literature.

[I may incidentally point out a minute instance of inspiration from Jayadeva in Narasinha Mehtā's work. In describing the dalliance of Rādhā and Kṛishṇa in ચાતુરી પેઝશી *pada* 8, we see:

ભુજબળ ભીડી બાથશું કસકસે બહુ કામિની,
કનવેલ કેસમાંહી લપટી, જાણિયે ઘન દામિની.

May we see in this a faint reflection of

उरसि मुरारेरुपहितहारे घन इव तरलवलाके ।
तडिदिव पीते—राजसि सुकृतविपाके ॥

from the *Gīta-Govinda*³⁰.]

I am not attempting to defend the eroticism in Narasinha Mehta's poetry. I offer only considerations which explain and account for it. I do not wish you to pass a verdict of not guilty; but want you to take into consideration extenuating circumstances;—circumstances which in our modern literature, will not exculpate the writer or even give him any benefit of extenuation; for instance, the numerous blushless similes, metaphors, descriptions &c. after the fashion of Sanskrit literature that tarnish the merits of '*Sarasvatī-chandra*' have no defence of any kind.

I have very little time left now to discuss at any length the question of જરભક્તિ (or illicit love in Kṛishṇa-worship) in Narasinha Mehta's poetry.

³⁰ *Gīta-Govinda*, V, 12.

I shall only briefly indicate the several explanations offered for this feature. Some contend that it is to be interpreted not literally but as અર્થવાદ. Others there are who argue that taking Kṛishṇa as the hero and the centre of this kind of *liaisons*, all blame attached to it disappears as he was a divine personality. If it is contended that such sentiments when circling round a person in the position of God would result in રસભાસ and not રસ, the answer is ready: Kṛishṇa's personality becomes impersonal under the psychological analysis of રસ adumbrated in the previous lecture. I admit there is a certain amount of conflict between this and the previous explanation.

Finally there is a school of critics who see an allegory in the whole story of Kṛishṇa, Rādhā, and Gopīs. They are neither human beings or divine persons, but merely allegorical presentations of certain ideas, human senses and the like. This defence, not easy to swallow, finds a certain amount of colourableness in a poem of Narasinha Mehta's ભક્તિ જ્ઞાનનાં પદો. (See પદ 35). I must quote it :

ધન્ય રે ધન્ય મહા પુણ્ય જશોદા તણું પુત્ર ભાવે પરિબ્રહ્મ રાજે;
 નંદનો નંદ આનંદ થઇ અવતર્યો, શેષ બ્રહ્મિભદ્ર સંગે બિરાજે.
 અમર આહીર, અધાંગ ગોપાંગના, વૃક્ષવેલી સર્વ ઋષિ રાણી;
 ભક્તિ તે રાધકા, મુક્તિ જશોમતી, વ્રજ વૈકુંઠ તે વેદવાણી.
 નિગમ વસુદેવજી, ગાય ગોપી ઋચા, દેવકી બ્રહ્મવિવાદ કહાવે;
 બ્રહ્મા કરલાકડી, વેણુ મહાદેવજી, પંચવદન કરી ગાન ગાવે.

ઇન્દ્રે અર્જુન અહંકાર દુયોધન, દેવતા સર્વ અવતાર લીધો;
ધર્મ તે રાય યુધિષ્ઠિર જાણે, દાસનો દાસ નરસૈને કીધો.

Here is a mixed presentation, partly showing the Gods as incarnate in the shepherds &c., and partly allegorizing *Bhakti* as *Rādhā*, Vedic hymns as cows and Gopis, and so forth. The combination is but a true reflection of the futile explanation.

[I must present another explanation, certainly not as futile as the above, but ingenious, inspiring and inspired, of the *Rāsa-līlā* of Kṛishṇa and the Gopīs. It is furnished by Principal Ānandaśankara B. Dhruva in his Presidential Address at the Indian Philosophical Congress held at Madras in 1928. (Page 13). I must quote him in full :

“The whole trouble of the Scientists arises from their failure to appreciate the true nature of consciousness. No analysis of mind or matter can successfully reduce reality to a series of discrete particulars or dethrone consciousness from its position. These Akrūras of scientists do not realize what confusion the Gopīs will fall into when Kṛishṇa is removed from their midst. *Reality is one eternal Rāsa of Kṛishṇa and Gopīs, Kṛishṇa setting the tune from the centre, as well as appearing by the side of every one of the Gopīs who occupy the points on the circumference.* Consciousness has thus a double aspect noumenal and the phenomenal. The latter is the legitimate province of Scientists, while the

former falls within the exclusive jurisdiction of philosophers.’

I am aware that Principal Dhruva brings in the *Rāsa-Līlā* here by way of suggestive illustration and does not approach in a direct line the question of the Kṛishṇa-Gopī myth, or tradition, as you like to call it.]

We have seen only one side of Narasinha's Muse. The other side that of

The જ્ઞાન and ભક્તિ (philosophical and devotional) poems of Narasinha.

જ્ઞાનભક્તિ, remains untouched. Within the limits of this lecture I cannot dwell on more than one or two specimens in this branch. In fact this branch covers more of didactic

than poetic ground. It will not be easy to find many specimens of really poetic merit in this branch. But I can pick up one or two, and these sublime in their poetic quality.

(1)

તારી કેમ પૂજી કરું, શ્રી કૃષ્ણ કરુણાનિધિ! અકલ આનંદ કહ્યો ન જાયે;
સ્થાવર જંગમ વિશ્વ વ્યાપી રહ્યા, કેશવો કંડિયે કયમ સમાયે?
બાર મેઘે કરી સ્નાન શ્રીપતિ ક્યાં; શંખની ધારે હરિ કેમ રીઝ્યા?
ઓગણપંચાસ તુને વાયુ વંજન કરે, સૂક્ષ્મ વાયુ તુને કયમ ગમીજ?
સૂરજરૂપે કરી ત્રણ ભોવન તપ્યાં, ચંદ્ર રૂપે કરી અમૃત ઠાર્યાં;
મેઘ રૂપે કરી વરસો રે વિકૃતા! વાયુ રૂપે કરીને વધાર્યાં;
અરાઢભાર વનસ્પતિ હરનિશ પીમળે, માળી તે પાતરી શીદ લાવે?
યુવા ચંદન કરી ઝાલુ! તુને પૂજિયે, અંગના બહેકની તુલ્ય નાવે.
તારે નિતનિત અવનવા નૈવેદ્ય કમળા કરે, સૂક્ષ્મનૈવેદ્ય કેમ તુલ્ય આવે?
ભાણે નરસૈયો, જોણે કૃષ્ણરસ ચાખિયો, પુનરપિ માતને ગર્ભ નાવે.

(ભક્તિજ્ઞાનનાં પદો, પદ ૬૬ મું).

Here we perceive in the heart and speech of this worshipper of Kṛishṇa—our poet, Narasinha Mehta—a queer conflict of attitudes, due to the dual recognition of God as formless and All-pervading and at the same time as incarnate in the form of Kṛishṇa,—a conflict which the poet tries to synthesize as best his Muse can. In ૫૬ 45 (of this ભક્તિ-જ્ઞાન Chapter) we hear the same poet exclaim :

“ પ્રતિદિને જડ કને જઈ કરી માંગતો, ઈશ! તું સાચા થાજે,
તોય પણ દુઃખ તો લેશ ટળતું નથી, થાકતો નથી તું તો કદા રે.”

which shows that material idol is to this poet-worshipper an impotent object.³¹ In the present poem, therefore, we must view the poet as accepting the Formless nature of God as *the Truth*, the અકલ આનન્દ (unguessed joy) of whose knowledge passeth comprehension,³² while recognizing as a practical hypothesis the popular material worship of Kṛishṇa in an incarnate form.

31. Cf. Akho: સજીવે નજીવો ઘડયો, સજીવો જઈ નજીવાને અડયો. etc.

32. To the single-minded philosophic eye of Akho his Joy is of the absolute vision:

“ અભિનવો આનન્દ આજ, અગોચર ગોચર હુવુંએ.”

where the poet realizes the spiritual vision, does not materialize it.

And now I shall conclude with Narasinha Mehta's sublimest poem, sublime in conception as well as in presentation :
 Narasinha's sublimest poem, poetizing philosophy.

(2)

નિરખ ને ગગનમાં ફોણ ધૂમી રહ્યો : તે જ હું તે જ હું રાખ્દ બોલે !
 શ્યામના ચરણમાં ઘૂંચું છું મરણ રે, અહિયાં ફોણ નથી ફૂળતોલે.
 શ્યામરોસા ધાળી, બુદ્ધિ ના રાદે કળી, અનન્ત ઓચ્છવમાં પંચ મૂલી !
 જડને ચેતનરસ કરી નાણવો, પકડી પ્રેમે સજ્જન મૂળી.
 જળહળ જ્યોત ઉદ્યોત રવિ ફોટમાં, હેમની ફોર ન્યાં નીસરે તોલે,
 સચ્ચિદાનંદ આનંદકીડા કરે, સોનાના પાવણા માંહિ ઝૂલે.
 ખતિ વિણ, તેવ વિણ સૂત્ર વિણ જે વળી અચળ જળકે સદા અનલ દીવો;
 નેત્ર વિણ નિરખવો, રૂપ વિણ પરખવો, વણ જિજ્ઞાસે રસ સરસ પીવો.
 અકળ આંવનાશી એ નવ જ જગમે કહ્યો, અરધ ઊરધની માંહે મહાલે ;
 નરસૈયાયો સ્વામી સકળ વ્યાપી રહ્યો, પ્રેમના તંતમાં સંત જાલે.

(ભક્તિ જ્ઞાનના પદો : પદ ૩૯ મું.)

This is perhaps one of the sublimest poems in the literature of the world. The poet combines here philosophic height with poetic beauty. He sees and asks us to see in the cosmic expanse,—in the expanse of the skies which symbolize the cosmos—the Great cosmic Soul, crying out “I am he!” (સૌંદ્રમ્) : in response to this cry the poet longs for death in *Him*, the death of the Individual soul, for there is nothing here below which is like *Him* (in fact there is nothing but *Him*): His splendour is beyond the reach of human intellect which loses its way in the eternal festival of the Universal Soul, the cosmic

evolution, or the phenomenal Universe, being that festival; those who, by the help of Love, have caught hold of the charm of imparting life to the dead, to the lifeless, are asked to realize the Living Essence in lifeless matter. Then they can see the vision of dazzling Light,—Light that is like myriads of suns; to them is vouchsafed the sight of a golden streak of that light; they see the Existing, Living, *Joyous Paramātmā*, enjoying his great game of joy, being visible in the various manifestations of the universe; they see Him swinging in a cradle of golden Light. To them this *Paramātmā* is an undying Lamp shining bright eternally, a Lamp with no wick, and unfed by oil of any kind. They see Him without their material eyes, feel him without any form though He is, they taste his sweetness without the help of a material tongue. He is indestructible, incomprehensible, moves freely high above and down below. Such is Narasinha's Lord, pervading all space (Well, if so, one may ask, he cannot be imprisoned and localized; Narasinha's answer is unique:): Yet, says the poet, Saints can catch hold of Him and confine Him with the subtle thread of Love.

Here is the poet's synthesis of Knowledge and Love (ज्ञान and ભક્તિ) at once subtle and sublime. Well may the poet ask us to behold him in the Vast Expanse of the Cosmos:

નિરખ ને ગગનમાં કેણુ ધૂમી રહ્યો !

Some one asked: which ગગન is intended here?

Govardharāma Tripāthī tells us somewhere, that it is the ચિદકાશ, the expanse of Life. Prof. Ānandaśankara said : આપણું આ ગગન શું ખોટું છે ? This vast expanse of the phenomenal world, its Ether Space, is good enough. I agree, and I accept, and with our poet I ask you all, individually and collectively :

નિરખ તે ગગનમાં કાણુ ધૂમી રહ્યો !

(I shall in my next lecture introduce you to another giant, Akho, -rather to my conception of him).

LECTURE V

A K H O.

Sparks from the Anvil.

“અદ્વૈતના શુષ્કભાસી વાદનાં વચનોના, પોતાની કવિતાની કાંઈક કડકશ કલાના હથોડા વડે, કહેવતો વડે, સુધટિત ઘાટ ધડીને આપણા મન અને બુદ્ધિ ઉપર દઢ છાપ પાડનારો સુવર્ણકાર અખો ભક્ત હેની સાદી પણ સખળ, સમર્થ મુખમુદ્રાથી પ્રભાવ સ્થાપનારો, સાહિત્યનાં ઔરણ હથોડો લઈને અહિં બેઠેલો જીવો. હેની સહામે કવિતાદેવી, પોતાના વિશ્વાસ તજીને, દીપ્તિમય આભૂષણો ફેંકી દઈને, સાદાં વસ્ત્ર પહેરી કમ્પમાન દેહથી ઊભી છે; તે ચિત્ર જોઈને બેદ કરશે નહિં; કેટલાક દઢ વિરાગીના પ્રભાવ આગળ લલનાનાં લાલિત્ય શમી જાયછે, હેવું આ ચિત્ર છે; એ કવિતાદેવીની વીણાના તાર તોડી નાંખીને આ કહણ આચાર્યે એ સુંદર વાદને દૂર ફેંકી દેવડાવ્યું-છે. તેથી એ દેવીની મુખમુદ્રા ઉપર દુઃખની છાયા પડીછે, તેથી આપણને કાંઈક બેદ થાયછે ખરો.”³³

Just eight years ago I stood before the students of the Elphinstone College, Bombay

A picture of Akho, as thrown on the screen of the poetic critic's mind.

and in the course of my address placed the above picture of Akho as one out of several ones thrown on an imaginary Cinema Screen, disclosed to them. In that picture

Akho is seated with his literary anvil and hammer

33. “મંગલ ભાષણ”—Inaugural Address—at the opening of the Gujarati Mandala, Elphinstone College, Bombay, on the 22nd January 1921. (‘વસન્ત’ માધ સં. ૧૯૭૭.)

before him—this poet of the Goldsmith caste. His facial features are plain but powerful, impressing our minds and intellect firmly. The Muse of Poetry stands before him trembling, divested of all her graceful features, all her brilliant ornaments, wearing simple garments. This need not cause us pain. Before certain powerful ascetic personalities the grace of the fair ones drops off. The severe Master has snapped off the strings of the Muse's *Vīṇā* (Lyre) and made her fling it aside. There is the shadow of grief and pain on the Muse's face—which makes us grieve too.

After a lapse of nearly a decade, shall I alter this picture? Not substantially. But I shall now try to present before you the inner essence of the poetic merit and sublimity which lie concealed under this picture.

For this purpose it will be necessary to consider the functions of Philosophy and Poetry and their mutual relation. Philosophy, then, is a quest after the inner meaning of things; the search for the real; the contemplation of human life in its relation to the beyond; an investigation of the relation between the seen and the unseen, the relation between Man, on the one hand, and the Universe and the Supreme soul on the other; an inquiry into the essential constitution of things. Poetry also has its eye on Truth as seen by the poet's inspired mind; it has one thing in common with Philosophy, the contem-

Poetry and
Philosophy:
their respective
functions.

plation of life and its ramified relations noted just above. The Philosopher and the Poet both are seers, but the methods of each are distinct, the paths by which they reach the goal are different; and their presentations are different. The Philosopher's method is analytical, the Poet's synthetical, he sees and grasps Truth by the help of direct intuition. The Poet is thus more truly a seer than is the Philosopher.

Indian Philosophy has, in addition, set before it, as the goal, the emancipation of the Soul from the trammels of unreality. How is this to be secured? This is one of the main problems which Indian Philosophy attempts to tackle. The means suggested for securing this emancipation is ज्ञान, knowledge. Not satisfied with this dry knowledge, the devotional school advocates भक्ति (devotional worship) as the means; whereas others there are who combine the two and advance ज्ञान-भक्ति सम्मुख्यवाद. — We need not travel far into the intricacies of Indian Philosophy just now. We shall touch them *en passant* when dealing with Akho's individual outpourings.

But I may touch another point here: viz., the question—if Philosophy and Poetry

The conditions under which Philosophy can be Poetized: emotion as an active force.

travel by separate paths, how and under what conditions can Philosophy be poetized? The answer will be found by considering the essential source of poetry. It is feeling, emotion, in other words, रस, as our Indian works on poetics tell us. Philosophy

and Poetry both have their beginning in Wonder. They are faced with Life, Universe and other problems, which start their sensation of Wonder; but not until feeling, emotion, steps in does poetry arise. Wonder, it is true, is the basis of અદ્ભુત રસ; but in its stage of mere sensation it does not poetize things; when it converts itself into an emotion, it becomes રસ—અદ્ભુત રસ; when other emotions supervene or flow in, other રસs are evolved; Jagannātha Pandita has stated in one place that અદ્ભુત રસ is at the bottom of all રસs. Thus the sensation of Philosophic Wonder must have the combination of emotion to yield a poetic result.

[Let me try and impress you with an illustrative comparison: Philosophy and Poetry are essentially, two distinct high mountain-peaks. If a golden bridge can be thrown across them and the two peaks linked up, the resulting view will be philosophic Poetry. When years ago, I was touring in the charming district of North Kanara, the southernmost end of the Bombay Presidency, I was vouchsafed the sight of many a grand or beautiful aspect of Nature in the mist-clad mountains or on the surging sea. During one of these happy moments I once passed between two high ranges of mountains, and saw a wondrous bridge of golden clouds linking the two ranges. Some such linking between these two sister branches of knowledge, Philosophy and Poetry, is a condition as rare as the glorious sight I then witnessed, for accomplishing the unique task of poetizing philoso-

phy. To change the imagery, I would say: when

ज्ञानगिरिनां शृङ्गने काव्यकिरणो रंगशे,

when the high peaks of philosophy will receive the tints from the rays of the Sun in the high heavens—the Sun of Poetry, then will Philosophy be successfully treated poetically.]

High imagination sometimes performs the function of emotion; the *Factor of wonder being very subsidiary*.

Sometimes high imagination alone performs this function of emotion. For instance, take the following from Akho's *ब्रह्मदीक्षा* :-

परम चैतन्य आदि निरंजन । अकरता पद सो सदा ।
अजा अल्प अर्वाक् अंजन । भो जगत पलमें तदा ।
सगुण ब्रह्म सो स्तुति पदार्थ । दृष्ट पदार्थ स्वामिनी ।
अखा ब्रह्म चैतन्यघनमें । भई अचानक दाभिनी ॥

The first step is a mere statement of the attributes of Brahma, the Great Living Essence, Immutable, the Beginning of All, Non-Creator;

It (as Plotinus uses the neuter gender as Indian Philosophy does,—It) then becomes *affected* in Its posterier aspect (अर्वाक् अंजन) by just a touch of *Māyā* (the unborn—अम)—and—here the poet's eye of Imagination has the beginning of a Vision—

भो जगत पलमें तदा

Then in an instant the Phenomenal World came into being (भो—भयो).

Further, as the basis of higher imaginative flight, the poet states :

“The *Saguṇa* Brahma (i.e, Brahma tinged by attributes) becomes the object of praise-worship, when, in the bosom of Brahma—the Mass (cloud) of life (चैतन्य)—suddenly appears the Lightning (दामिनी), viz., *Māyā*, the mistress of the Visible (Phenomenal) World.” This last metaphor is not a mere rhetorical flourish,—it is a spontaneous idea born out of the poet’s imaginative vision. Hence this is poetry worked out with philosophic materials.

Instance where-
in high imagina-
tion converts the
factor of wonder
into emotion.;

I shall give another illustrating instance. It is a philosophic poem describing the evolution of the Phenomenal World out of the central figure, Brahma, the noumenon.

कृष्ण कैसी होरी मचाई :

अचरज लखियो न जाई,

असत सत कर दिखलाई.

कृष्ण कैसी०

एक समय श्री कृष्ण देवके होरी खेलन मन आई ;

एकसें होरी मचे नहिं कबहु बातें करूं बहुताई,

यही प्रभुने ठहराई.

कृष्ण कैसी०

पांच भूतकी धातु मिलाकर अंड पचकारी बनाई ;

चौद भुवन रंग भीतर भरकर नानारूप धराई,

प्रगट भये कृष्ण कन्हाई.

कृष्ण कैसी०

पांच विषयकी गुलाल बनाकर बीच ब्रह्मांड ऊडाई ;

जिस जिस नैन गुलाल परी वह सुधबुध सब वीसराई,
नहि सूझत अपुनाई.

कृष्ण कैसी०

वेद अंत अंजनकी सिलाका जिसने नैननमें पाई ;
ब्रह्मानंद तिसको तम नाशयो, सूत्र परी अपुनाई,
हेारी कछु बनी न बनाई,
हेारी कछु बनी न बनाई.

The poetic wonder at the appearance of the great Cosmos is the seed-feeling here, philosophic wonder and poetic wonder combined as one principle. Then comes in the Seer's imagination to build up a brilliant picture before the mental eye: the Cosmic evolution in its completeness of appearance is here conceived as the Spring-time Holi-game of Brahma (here called Kṛishṇa because it was Kṛishṇa's favourite pastime in the district of Gokula). This game here has the special feature of presenting as Real what is really Unreal (असत् is made visible as सत्), a thing the wonder whereof is incomprehensible (अचरज लखियो न जाई). The poet starts with the statement that-Once upon a time Kṛishṇa (Brahma) had a desire to play the *Holi* game; but it is a game which cannot be played by one individual; so Brahma decided to turn Itself from one into many: (एको बहु स्याम्). The Brahma therefore mixed the metals of the Five Elements (पंच महाभूत) and created the Syringe of the Cosmic Egg, filled it with the varied hues of the fourteen worlds, and assuming various forms manifested itself in those forms. (Spraying coloured water on one's play-mates from a metal syringe is part of the game in the Holi festival.)

Another item, property in this game, is red powder thrown by the players on one another. This was supplied by the objects of the five senses (शब्द, स्पर्श, रूप, रस and गन्ध), which were compounded into this *gulāl* powder and flung broadcast in the midst of the Universe; as a result, as happens with actual *gulāl* blinding the players' eyes, those who got **the** *gulāl* of the five *vishayas*, lost their senses and intellect, and could not realize their true 'Self-ness'. The poet gives the remedy: those who applied the medicinal stick of Vedānta knowledge to their blinded eyes, says Brahmānanda, had their darkness (blindness)-ignorance-destroyed, and they got their self-realization; thus the Holi manifestation vanished at once; there was no Holi performance created or formed.

In this manner the grand phenomenal creation of Māyā was once again involuted by Brahma into Itself:

लीची संकेली हरिये विचारी प्रवल निज माया रे,

as another unknown poet says,

We see here the otherwise dry intellectual ideas built up into a brilliant structure in this poem by the unassisted power of high Imagination, the underlying principle of Wonder being converted from mere feeling into emotion.

Instance where-
in high imagina-
tion functions
unaided, the fac-
tor of wonder
being dormant
and uncreative.

Just one more instance of the
principle of high imagination func-
tioning as the inspiring force of
poetry: Let Akho furnish it:

જેમ વર્ષાઋતુ જાય, શરદઋતુ રૂડી દીસે;
 દામિની દોડી પળાય, વાય મન (? મન્દ) હળવા દીસે;
 ચહુ દિસ ચમકે ચંદ, દ્વંદ્વ બહુ મનનો ભાગે;
 તેમ ભાગે ભવ બ્રાન્તિ, કાન્તિ જેમ દ્વિતીયા આગે;
 વિમળવપુ હોય વારિ ચતુર લિંગ દેખી લહે;
 ચિદાકાશ ચિનમય અખા, ધ્યાતા ધ્યેય સમરસ રહે.

(અનુભવખિન્દુ : ૧૫)

At first sight one may take this as mere descriptive poetry. It is not that. The descriptive element is entirely subservient to the main idea bodied forth by the poet's mind, furnishing only apt illustrative material for that idea. The poet's aim is to impress his audience with the serene atmosphere of the ચિન્મય condition of the Living Essence, ચિદાકાશ wherein ધ્યાતા and ધ્યેય (the Thinker and the Thought object) remain, -not merged into each other as he emphasizes elsewhere, but remain in a unique condition of equipoise (સમરસ રહે). To effect this the poet's spontaneous imagination pictures to itself, and presents the picture of, the calm state which follows the departure of the rainy season and attends the advent of the *śarad* season; when the flashing lightning flees far away into non-existence, and gentle and light breezes blow with delight, and the moon (long pent up in the imprisoning clouds) beams all around in its quiet glory, or, as Wordsworth has put it,

the moon doth with delight

Look round her, when the heavens are bare.

The poet thus presents an aspect of nature which is in unique harmony with the state of mind wherein all conflicts of pleasure and pain and similar dual factors (द्वंद्व) pass away, which, in its turn, results in the disappearance of the illusion of existence which is typified by the waters of streams becoming pure in the śarad season. The poet's main purpose is to present a vivid contrast between the storm-laden condition of the world-weighted mind and the peace-filled and pure state of the human soul in its union with the Supreme soul; to effect this purpose the poet finds at hand and utilizes as his type the simple but telling contrast between the state of Nature in the rainy and the śarad seasons. In doing this, his use of the material is not for descriptive purposes, nor does he use the simple but charming ઉપમા as an extraneous *alankāra*. The *alankāra*, in fact, grows out of the intrinsic idea, and is nothing but an evolved aspect. As Mr. Rāmanārāyaṇa Pāṭhaka, in his thoughtful and learned Presidential Address at the Literature Section of the Ninth Gujarātī Sāhitya Parishad (pp. 2-3) has pithily put it:

“અલંકાર વસ્તુથી ભિન્ન, વસ્તુને અલંકૃત કરવાને યોજેલી, આગન્તુક વસ્તુ છે એમ કહેવું જોઈએ છે. કાવ્યને સમજાવવા વસ્તુ અને અલંકાર એવો ભેદ સ્વીકારાય તેનો વાંધો નથી પણ તેને તત્ત્વતઃ ભિન્ન માનવો તે જોઈએ છે. x x x x x x
x x x x કાવ્યમાં કશું આગન્તુક હોઈ શકે જ

નહિ. કલામીમાંસક કોશેએ આપેલી દલીલથી આનો વિચાર કરિયે. તે પૂછેછે: ‘જે’ને તમે અલંકાર કહોછો તે કાવ્યમાં એકતા પામ્યોછે કે નહિ? ‘પામ્યો હોય તો તે આગન્તુક નથી, પામ્યો ન હોય તો તે કાવ્ય નથી.’

You will notice, in the illustration from *Anubhavabindu* here discussed, Akho has produced poetry by the more or less unaided power of high Imagination, wherein Emotion, (*i.e.* the emotion of wonder), if it exists, is a dormant factor, not playing any creative part.

Philosophy when placed in the Poet's forge thus converts itself into poetry, the forge the fire whereof is emotion and, occasionally, imagination kindred to emotion or the Seer's Vision.

Let us now take up Akho and his mission as a philosopher-poet. That he had a high mission of this nature will be seen by a glance at the times which enveloped Akho's life; which will show that it was not the sticks that made the fire, but that he was the lightning out of heaven that kindled the dry dead fuel.³⁴ What were the stars under which Akho as a philosopher-poet was born?

34. See extracts from Carlyle's *Heroes and Hero-Worship* given in Lecture II of this series.

I do not mean astrological stars; my stars are the social and other conditions of his

1. Social and other conditions in Akho's time.

2. Protestantism a world-force.

times. Well, untouchability, caste-rigidity, and similar superstitions dominated the social atmosphere in his times. In the field of religion, idolatry and Vaishṇavism in its dogmatic and sectarian form, were

rampant. Over a century before him the *Bhakti* movement was wide-spread all over India. Akho flourished between 1615 A. D. and 1674 A. D.; while the *Bhakti* movement prevailed in the 15th and 16th Centuries A. D.. Chaitanya was born in 1485 A. D. and his cult spread in Bengal Orissa and Bihar. Nimbārka in the South based his creed on that of Rāmānujāchārya. Vallabhāchārya was born in 1479 A. D. and his cult starting in the North spread and was rooted firmly in Gujarāt. Viṭṭhala-worship in the South was no doubt purer than the Vallabha cult in Gujarāt. Akho had faced only the latter. The whole atmosphere, saturate with idolatry and superstition, disgusted Akho and he rose in protest against it. True, his protestantism did not gather about him any large following like that of Kabīra, Nānaka and others. But he certainly was a beacon-light of power by himself. The times in which he lived gave rise to protestant activity not in India alone but in Europe also.—It seems the world was affected by an unseen influence of protestantism.

While this protestantism in Europe used prose for its vehicle of ideas, our Indian side resorted to poetry for its weapon. To the Indian mind the metrical bent is an inborn feature. But this alone will not account for this adoption of verse by Akho. If his mind was impregnated with the burden of Great Thought, he could not help it, but it must deliver itself in song, no matter if the song was not well ordered but rough. The impetus came to Akho from his disappointment at the unsufficing nature of the current religion and of the popular method of religious relief. He tells us in an auto-biographical vein:

ધણાં કૃત્યો કર્યાં મેં બાજ, તો એ ન ભાગી મનની દાઝ;
દર્શન વેશ જોઈ બહુ રહ્યો, પછી ગુરુ કરવાને ગોકુળ ગયો.
ગુરુ કીધો મેં ગોકુળનાથ, નગુરા મનને ધાલી નાથ,
મન મનાવી સગુરો થયો, પણ વિચાર નગુરાનો નગુરો રહ્યો.

Then came his connection with the real *guru*, Brahmānanda Swāmī at Benares. This set the spark to the mine, and his protestant-explosion came out in the form of his massive poetry.

Akho's protest was against superstitions, no doubt, as is testified by his numerous verses against આભડ્ડેટ, idol-

The objects of Akho's Protestantism; caste, idolatry; and incidentally, literary effeminacy e. g. poetry of *Kṛishṇa-līlā*.

worship and the like. But his protest, incidentally, was against literary effeminacy, as evidenced in the inordinate indulgence in the kind of poetry which dealt with *Kṛishṇa-līlā*, the amours and dalliance of the gay hero with his shepherd girls on the

banks of the Yamunā. He rose in revolt against this erotic verse and, on his part, poetized philosophy. He went to the extreme of despising the poet: ‘ସାମାନ୍ୟ ଶ୍ରବିତା ନ ଗଞ୍ଜିଷା’ exclaims Akho by way of protest. Well, we take him at his word.

We must admit that the bulk of his compositions contains either philosophical aphorisms or elaborate philosophical treatises. But in the course of these come out flashes of poetic conceptions which differentiate the works from purely philosophical discourses. I therefore call him philosopher-poet. This poetic strain in his compositions is to be attributed to two elements: (1) his view of Bhakti, which, on the one side, leans towards the dualistic doctrine (ଦ୍ୱୈତ ଧର୍ମ) and yet does not coincide with it, and, on the other side, accepts the monistic (Advaitic) interpretation of ଭକ୍ତି, and yet fights shy of it, in a way; and (2) The sublime vision which is granted to the Monistic contemplator of God, His Universe and the relation of the two, which brings in the the hypothetical Sorceress in philosophy,—I mean *Māyā*.

His poetic strain comprizes two factors: (1) *Bhakti* of a type lingering between *दैत* and *अदैत* aspects, and (2) the sublime vision of the monistic contemplator.

These two elements furnish the material for the poetic outlook which characterizes Akho's compositions; the fervour, i. e. the *Bhakti* element, furnishing the emotional factor and the latter, the philosophic vision, furnishing the element of wonder-tinged imagination; which both are components or stimulants of poetry.

Let us illustrate each of these two elements. Take *Bhakti*. There are two aspects to *Bhakti*; according to the *Vedantī* *ज्ञान* is identical with *bhakti*; to know is to love; if you cannot love, verily you have not known. That is Śāṅkara Vedantī's position. (and yet for the purposes of *bhakti* as for other practical purposes this school has to postulate a *सगुण ईश्वर* as an empiric necessity). It is to this aspect of Brahma that the *Upamanyu Stotra* exclaims:

विरहीव विभो प्रियामयं
परिपश्यामि भवन्मयं जगत् ॥

Some such feeling as this it was that made Byron express himself in his "Dream" thus:

And to his eye
There was only one beloved face on earth,

x

x

x

x

he had looked

Upon it till it could not pass away;
He had no breath, no being, only in hers:

× × ×

× ×

he had ceased

To live within himself; She was his life."

To the dualistic creed, on the other hand,
Bhakti has as its direct object the

The *bhakti* of the dualistic creed, *સગુણ* *ઈશ્વર* *par excellence*. To him the object of worship is apart from himself, outside himself, above himself; anything but identical with himself. The *bhakti* in Akho's creed is more of the former type, than of this latter one.

Even when he describes his view of *bhakti* in *Kaḍavūn* XI of his *Akhegītā* it is

Akho's *ભક્તિ* different; being based on *સર્વાત્મ-ભાવ* as the cause, *સર્વાત્મ ભાવ*, the presence of *Brahma* in everybody, that is identified with *પ્રેમસદ્ગુણ* *ભક્તિ* wherein the *સર્વાત્મ ભાવ* is a shade away from *બ્રહ્મજ્ઞાન*, the knowledge of *Brahmā* through self-

realization. True, he begins with the statement that he sees in all individuals the impersonations of *Harī* (God-Brahma), he sees nothing that is outside of Brahman; and therefore he must love all; and that is the aspect of *bhakti* he accepts:

વળી વળી કહું છું ભક્તિ વિશેષજી,
જેહ ન દેખે હરિ વિના શેષજી
પેખે સધળા હરિના વેષજી,
તે જન ન કરે કહેનો ઉવેષજી.

But from this step he gradually slides by imper-

And yet that
ભક્તિ impercept-
ibly glides off in-
to gradual shades
of dualistic ભક્તિ.

ceptible shades into an aspect of
Bhakti which is not easily
distinguishable from the *Bhakti*
of the dualistic creed. Thus, he
goes on:

ઉવેખ ન કરે ક્રોધનો, આતમા વિલસી રહ્યો,
જેહને શ્રી ભાગવત ગાયે, ગીતા ઉપનિષદે જે કહ્યો.
ભાઈ ભક્ત તે જે એમ જાણે, જાણીને હૃદયે ધરે,
સ્વામી માહરો રહ્યો સધજે, અહર્નિશ ચિંતન કરે.
ભુવન ત્રણમાં રહ્યો પૂરી પૂરણુ સ્વે પરમાતમા;
પોતે તો પિયુજી નિરંતર પણ ભેદ દેખે ભાતમાં.

So far there is the immanence of Brahma recognized as the basis. The next step holds one foot in this and another near the precincts of dualistic worship; thus:

માહરો રામ રમે છે સર્વ વિશે, એમ હેતે હીસે મન;
હુરિ કહે, એ સાંભળે હુરિ, હુરિને સોંપે તન.

(This idea of હેત-love, and consequent joy (મન હીસે) savour of the loved one being apart).

નિત્ય રાસ નારાયણનો દેખે તે અનંત અપાર,
જિહાં જેવો તિહાં તેહવો, નારાયણ નર નાર.

In this conception of the *Rāsa* of Nārāyaṇa, his impersonations as various individuals, -man, woman and all, we see a combination of the doctrine of immanence of the *Advaita* view and the dualistic idea of distinct individuality.

A picture of a true ભક્ત: which is clearly dualistic in type.

Now comes the picture of a truly દ્વૈત ભક્ત, dualistic worshipper.

ગદગદ કંઠ ગાતે થકે, રોમાંચિત હોયે ગાત્ર,
હૃદય આંસુ, બહુ હેત હૃદયે, પ્રેમ કરું તે પાત્ર.

Mark the last expression particularly: પ્રેમ કરું પાત્ર which distinctly connotes an object of love and worship apart from the worshipper. The further description of the *bhakta* depicts the devoted condition of his mind:

ખાતો પીતો બોલતો દેખતો તે સધળે રામ,
વધ્યું મન રહે તેહનું, શિયત્ર સંસારી કામ.
જેમ જર વળુંધી જીવતી તેનું મન રહે પ્રીતમ પાસ,
અહર્નિશ રહે આલોચતી, ભાઈ એહનું મન હરિદાસ.

(Here is a faint echo of વિરહીવ વિભો પ્રિયામયં પરિપશ્યામિ ભવન્મયં જગત્ quoted before.)

This being the picture of the worshipper and his *bhakti*, he tells us:

નવનીત સરખું હૃદય કામળ, કહ્યું ન જાયે હેત,
આંખમાંહે અમૃત ભરિયું, હરિ ભક્તિ કરું ક્ષેત્ર.

Can we see much variation here from the *Bhakti* of the *Dvaita* school?

Even when Akho extols the value of જ્ઞાન and જ્ઞાની, he cannot divest himself of the associations of ભક્તિ, and traditions of the Vaishṇava School. Thus he tell us:

સાની વિહારી ગોપી જશા, તેજ સાની જેને ગોપીની દશા;
 ગોપી ભૂલી ધર ને બાર, ગોપી ભૂલી કુટુમ્બ પરિવાર;
 પોતાની દેહ પણ ભૂલી ગઈ, અખા કામની કુળવંત થઈ;
 પ્રસન્ન થઈ પ્રભુ પ્રેમે મળ્યો, જગ જોગારથ કરવો ટળ્યો;
 વિધિ નિષેધ ને થાપ ઉથાપ, સંકલ્પવિકલ્પ ટળ્યો સંતાપ;
 પ્રગટ્યો ઉરમાં પ્રેમાનંદ, પિયે સુધારસ પ્રમદાવૃન્દ;
 સખી સમાગ્મ સદા નિજધામ, અખા અક્ષયરસ તેનું નામ.

(Chhappa, 697-698.)

And yet, as we have seen, this *bhakti* of Akho is firmly rooted in the Advaitic

Yet, Akho's *ભક્તિ* is firmly rooted in the Advaitic creed:

Therefore it is in a striking contrast to the *ભક્તિ* of Narsinha Mehta.

That being so the *bhakti* of Akho bears a striking contrast to the *bhakti* of Narasinha Mehta. True, Narasinha handles Advaitic ideas and doctrines, but his foot is firmly placed on the foundation of *bhakti*, pre-eminently Krishna worship. The idea conveyed in

Akho's line આપ કેરું રૂપ આપ વખાણે is no doubt more poetically clothed in Narasinha's line : બ્રહ્મ લટકાં કરે બ્રહ્મ પાસે. Again in the sublime poem beginning with નિરખ ને ગગનમાં ફાણુ ધૂમી રહ્યો, Narasinha rises to a great Advaitic height. And yet, while Akho's *bhakti* is at its root identical with રાત and his face is turned towards the નિર્ગુણ phase of Brahma, Narasinha's *bhakti* represents the worship of the સગુણ ઈશ્વર. Narasinha, like the shephard-damsels of Gokula, was not satisfied with the રાત preached to them by Uddhava. To Narsinha, as to these Gopīs, the diffuse moonshine was not sufficing (note, please, it

was welcome but not sufficing). He and the Gopīs were craving (not crying) for the moon. It was not merely a longing for something afar from the sphere of their sorrow. To him this God of his was the object of his પ્રેમભક્તિ (devotion of love). He should be such as he could catch and imprison in his heart and secure by the merest thread of love (પ્રેમના તંત્રમાં સંત ઝાલે).

We must note Narasinha's inverted position regarding જ્ઞાન and ભક્તિ against that of Akho:

Mutual positions of જ્ઞાન and ભક્તિ reversed between Akho and Narasinha.

From the angle of vision of જ્ઞાન Narasinha recognizes the nature of God as incomprehensible (અકુળ અવિનાશી એ નવ જ જાએ કહ્યો) and diffuse (અરધ ઊરધની માંહિ મહાલે નરસૈયાએ સ્વામી સકુળ વ્યાપી રહ્યો.) and only apprehensible by the intellect of man; like a woman's heart, he is elusive, you know it least when you think you know it most; or, as the *Kenopanishad* tells us,

यस्यामतं तस्यमतं मतं यस्य न वेद सः ।

अविज्ञातं विजानतां विज्ञातमविजानताम् ॥

In the case of woman's heart age-long conventions of society operate as the આવરણ શક્તિ of *Māyā* operates in the case of *Brahma*. Recognizing this standpoint Narasinha nevertheless is a *dvaitavādi* worshipper whose position is that of the Gopīs who said to Uddhava; I re-quote Dayarama's lines, quoted before, in a different connection in my last lecture:—

હમારા પ્રભુ સધળે રે, હમારા તો એક સ્થળે,
હમે રીઝો આંદરણે રે, હમે રીઝું ચંદ્ર મળ્યે.

the એક સ્થળ (the centre where their God was to be located or localized) being their hearts, or, speaking materially, their hearths and homes.

The positions of the two giants of our ancient Gujarātī poetry was thus practically mutually reversed. The one placed જ્ઞાન as the foundation, the other emphasized ભક્તિ as the true means of salvation. We can realize this contrast if we read a single stanza of Akho by the side of another from Dayārāma's *Resika Vallabha* which for the purpose of this contrast, duly represent the Vaishṇavite view common to Narasinha and Dayārāma. Here is Akho:

ભાઈ ભક્તિ જેવી પંખણી, જેને જ્ઞાન વૈરાગ્ય બે પાંખ છે;
ચિદાકાશ માંહે તે જ ઊડે જેને સદ્ગુરુરૂપી આંખ છે. 35

And here is Dayārāma:

એ ભક્તિના બે પુત્ર છે, જ્ઞાન વૈરાગ્ય કહાવે,
જ્યાં ગાય ધરમાં આવી, રહેજે વત્સ ચાલ્યાં આવે 36

Thus, with Akho ભક્તિ is by itself helpless, it can fly only if જ્ઞાન and વૈરાગ્ય help it. With the Vaishṇava school ભક્તિ is *the* main factor, and જ્ઞાન and વૈરાગ્ય are its mere offsprings, they follow ભક્તિ as calves follow the cow automatically. These passages sharply mark the difference in the two outlooks.

The second factor in Akho's poetic strain: જ્ઞાન, i.e. the sublime vision of the Monistic contemplation.

To come, now, to the second element in the poetic strain of Akho's compositions; viz, the sublime vision which is the privilege of Monistic contemplation, or, in one word, જ્ઞાન:—take his unique treatment of ઐકાર

(1)

સમઝી ન જાય એવી માયા, દીસે નહી તે અવતી,
ચાદ લોકની આદિ માતા, ઐકારથી પહેલી હતી.

ત્રિગુણ પહેલી શત્યસ્વામિની તેણે ગુણ જનમી એલા કર્યાં ૩૭

The position of ઐકાર here is no doubt subordinate, *Māyā* is the principal subject of treatment, but when we consider the nature and function of ઐકાર the inner idea will be manifest. Here we have just to note the relative position of ઐકાર and *Māyā* : *Māyā* existed *before* ઐકાર.

The relative position of Brahma, *Māyā* and ઐકાર.

Now the relative position of Brahma, *Māyā* and ઐકાર :

(2)

થયું તેમ જેમ હતું આગે, જાણણહારે જાણિયે,
જે ઐકારની આદ્ય હતો, વેદ પુરાણે વખાણિયો. ૩૮

Here we are told that Brahma existed *before* ઐકાર.

37 Akhegitā VII-2-3

38 Akhegitā XIII 2

Thus Brahma, *Māyā* and *अकार* come in a sequence of time. However, the relation of *Māyā* to Brahma is unique; She comes after Brahma and yet she is conceived as co-eval with Brahma, according as one conceives them independently or inter-dependently. We need not go deeper into these Vedantic problems. This bare statement is enough for our present purpose.

Now, we must see how Akho explain *अकार* on its own account.

પરા, પશ્યંતી, મધ્યમા, વૈષ્ણરી, પિંડબ્રહ્માણ્ડ વિશે ચારે ખરી;
સોહં શબ્દ વૈરાટને વિષે એક સૂત્ર પિંડ માંહિ લખે.
લેતાં શ્વાસથી ઊઠે સકાર, મૂકયે શ્વાસે થાય હકાર;
સકાર હકારનો હોએ લોપ, ત્યાં ઓંકાર રહે વણુઓપ. ૩૯

The gist of this is: that the four kinds of sound (પરા પશ્યંતી મધ્યમા, and વૈષ્ણરી) exist in the Universe as also in the micro-cosm of the body, and the sound સોહં discloses a principle running uniformly through the whole; this is in the form of *अकार* which is evolved from સોહં by the dropping of *स्* and *ह* therefrom. This is the all pervading *नादब्रह्म*.

If so, how could *બ્રહ્મ* be pre-existent with reference to *अकार*? The answer will be that the pre-existent one is the absolute Brahma, whereas *अकार* is a subsequent form assumed by Brahma and is known as *नादब्रह्म*.
Now, we must leave this aside for

The parts played by Brahma, *Māyā* and *अकार* in the creation of the Universe.

a moment, and must consider the several parts played by Brahma, *Māyā* and ॐकार in the creation of the Universe. The part played by Brahma is entirely passive. Brahma is अकर्ता, non-creator. It is when *Māyā*, the Creative Activity of Brahma, steps in that the Universe comes into being. Till then *Māyā* is not quite non-existent, he is co-eval with Brahma, but merged in it, as Lightning is lying dormant in the Rain-Cloud. Now let Akho speak for himself:

અણુછતી અગ્ન તમારી અંગીકૃત સરખી અશી,
તે મધ્ય પડ્યું ધામ તમારું ત્યારે ઈશ્વર થઈ ને વિલસી. 40

Māyā is અણુછતી, hidden, merged, (અંગીકૃત) as it were in you (Brahma); your light penetrates her (*Māyā*) and then she sports herself by becoming *Īśvara*,—the Creator. Thus it is not માયાવિશિષ્ટ બ્રહ્મ that is the Creative *Īśvara*, but *Māyā* penetrated by the light of Brahma,—બ્રહ્મવિશિષ્ટ માયા—that is the Creative *Īśvara*.

જેમ કાચનું મંદિર રચ્યું નીલ પીત શુભ્ર સ્યામનું,
તે ઉપર તપ્યો સૂરજ જ્યારે ત્યારે વિચિત્ર રૂપ થયું ધામનું.
કૈવલ્ય સૂરજ તપે સદા, માયા તે મંદિર કાચ,
ઈશ્વર નામ તે તેહનું, જીવ થઈ માન્યું સાચ. 41

Repeating the same simile, with a very slight variation, Akho says elsewhere :

મ્હેટા મંદિર ખહાર ચાર દિશ કાચો ઢાળ્યા,
 નીલ પીત બહુ રંગ ઢંગના ભેદો ભાળ્યા;
 ઝિગ્યો શશી^૦ કાં સૂર, દરથી અતિશે ઝળકે,
 દેખાડે બહુ રૂપ, ધૂપ વિવિધ પેર ચળકે;
 અખા ઉપર અવલોકતાં, તહાં તેમનું તેમ છે,
 તેમ ત્રિલોકી જાણુજે, એક વસ્તુ વડે એમ છે. ⁴²

[I may incidentally point out a strange co-incidence (a સંવાદ) between this sublime conception of Akho and Shelley's in the following lines in *Adonais*. I shall repeat them here, though I have referred to this co-incidence elsewhere ;⁴³

“The one remains, the many change and pass.
 Heaven's light for ever shines, Earth's
 shadows fly ;
 Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
 Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
 Until Death tramples it to fragments.”]

In the passage from *Anubhavabindu* just cited, Akho, has his emphasis on the immutability of the Absolute Brahma. In that from *Akhe Gitā* XIX his finger is towards the transformation of *Māyā* into a creative agency, *Īśvara*. In either of them we miss the means wherewith the Universe is raised up. The unborn (અજન) *Māyā* who lay dormant in

42 *Anubhava-bindu* 27

43. My article on પ્રેરણા in “Gujarāt” માગશીર્ષ ૧૯૮૫
 Page 176.

the bosom of the Absolute Brahma,-and whom Akho therefore calls શૂન્ય સ્વામિની (શૂન્ય=Brahma; or, the Void of Nothingness before creation), becomes, in બ્રહ્મશીલા (cited above), દૃષ્ટપદારથસ્વામિની, the mistress of the Phenomenal World, as soon as she has raised it up.

What is the means employed by Māyā in this process of instantaneous creation ?

The means by which Māyā builds up the phenomenal world instantaneously ; her magic wand, ઐકાર

What is her magic wand ? It is ઐકાર. Akho in his પંચીકરણુ tells us short the function of ઐકાર is to obey the forceful command of Māyā and assume the threefold form of સર્વ, રજસ્ and તમસ્ with the help

of its three components, (અ, ઉ, મ્) (three માત્રા,); and through that evolve the whole Universe:

તે ઐકાર અચિંત્ય અંકાર, ત્રિધા થાય અવાચ્યને ગ્તેર.

(This ઐકાર is an inconceivable off-shoot and assumes the triple form by the force of અવાચ્ય-અનિર્વચનીય-which are synonyms of Māyā (અનિર્વચનીય=Indescribable; undefinable).

Thus ઐકાર is the magic wand in the hand of this sorceress, Māyā. Let us examine this wand in the light of the

An analytical examination of ઐકાર :

ૐ=1. an affirmation of the સત્ aspect of Brahma

2. The opening basic note in music.

above discussion, assisted by our imaginative insight. ૐ initially expresses an assertion; "Yes" is a meaning of આમ્ in Sanskrit. Affirmation, solemn and respectful, equivalent to "So be it," "Amen;" While 'Amen' comes at the end of

a prayer &c., ओम् begins a reading of the Vedas as also ends it. Well, of what is ओम् the affirmation? Of Brahma or rather its सत् (existence) aspect, say they. There is another view; ओम् corresponds to the opening of a basic note when music is begun; the name उद्गीथ which is given to ओंकार lends colour to this view; the word being connected with गै to sing and उत् prefixed to it. A mass of mystic significance and treatment has gathered round this ओंकार ever since the *Chhāndogya Upanishad* was framed. But shedding off all these accretions, if we look underneath them, we find a few broad ideas of a suggestive nature. They are these;

- (a) ॐ through its three constituents, its *mātras* (अ, उ, म्), leads it to the final pause *Amātra* (अमात्र) i. e. Brahma;
- (b) ॐ is the voice of God, the creative symphony and thus identified with Brahma; while on the other side of the सगुण ईश्वर who is ओंकारयुक्त ब्रह्म rests the निर्गुण ब्रह्म.
- (c) ओम् by its स्वनि (intonation)—a constant deep sound A—symbolizes the नादब्रह्म aspect of ब्रह्म.
- (d) The presence of the material phenomenal world had to be accounted for; this was done by introducing the *Māyā* theory.
- (e) Along with it, the question of cosmogony had to be faced and a synthesis was effected

with the Māyā theory by taking *Māyā* at the fountain source of the creative process; સમુદય ઈશ્વર being on this side of creation, નિર્ગુણ બ્રહ્મ on the other side, in the beyond, the absolute અધિષ્ઠાન.

In this set of doctrines, ઐકાર figures as the creative symphony used by *Māyā*; ઐકાર — the creative symphony used by *Māyā*. the symphony which arranged the pre-cosmic chaos into the well-rhythmed cosmos. It is the herald of Creation, it is the sublime principle of the grand cosmic harmony;—the grand symphonic power which called together the wandering atoms, rather, the electrons, into a rhythmically marching order, even as the shepherd's flute calls together the wandering flocks of sheep and marches them homeward in the silent sundown stillness.

Thus, *Māyā* was before this ઐકાર, for she it was who called forth the symphony. Did, then, the electrons pre-exist eternally? No; they came into being *at some time*. Before them was શૂન્ય! And here the impossibility of matter being created out of nothing faces us and at the same time fades away. In that શૂન્ય in the Great Silence, the Absolute shines alone:—

શૂન્યમાં સોહામણો એ.

This then is the function of ઐકાર—this high symphony of cosmic evolution,—the ઉચ્ચ ગાંનના પુકાર which the poet hears in still midnight depths.

Akho has presented his tenets on this subject—not in the poetic analysis worked out above. His is an outwardly dry presentation which when examined as above yields ideas of poetic sublimity. If this does not entitle him to the honor of being called a poet, Seers like Browning will have to be dethroned from their exalted positions. Browning's celebrated poem, Abt Vogler, bears traits similar to those of Akho's compositions. In fact, Akho's poetry lies concealed inside his જ્ઞાન aspect, and flashes out occasionally,—even as the lightning does from inside the rain-cloud. It may thus be likened to Māyā lying inside of Brahma,—flashing forth her creation, the phenomenal world; she being the દામિની in બ્રહ્મચૈતન્યવન; and Māyā the Creative power of Īśvara, is but His poetry.

But let me introduce you to a composition of his which combines emotional effusions with high imaginative vision:

અભિનવો આનંદ આજ, અગોચર ગોચર હવું એ;
પરપંચ પાર મહારાજ તે પૂરણ બ્રહ્મ સ્તવું એ.
હરિહર અજ ભુવનેશ તે તણો ધૃશ અખપતિ એ;

X X X X X

સ્વે ચૈતન્ય ધનરાય શન્યમાં સોહામણો એ;
તે નાવે વાણી માંદ્ય, તે નહિ વિરાટ ને વામણો એ.

X X X X X

X X X X X

એ જાણ્યે ગયો જંજળ, યથારથ જેમ તેમ થયું એ;
તિહાં કર્મ ન લાગે કાળ, સભર ભરાઈ તે રહ્યું એ.

તિહાં હવું મન લેલીન, જઈ ચૈતન્ય સભર ભયું એ;
 નહિ કે દાતા દીન, તન્મય સહજે સજ થયું એ.
 પ્રગટ્યાં કાટિ કહ્યાણુ આપાપર વિણુશ્યે રહ્યું એ;
 સદા સદોદિત ભાણુ, ઉદે અસ્ત કારણુ ગયું એ.
 કહે અખો આનંદ અનુભવને લહેવાતણો એ;
 એહવો પૂરણુ પરમાનંદ નિત્ય સરાઉં અતિધણો એ.”

What unknown bliss is mine to-day ! I grasp
 the grasp-defying Thing. Praise be
 to the Perfect Brahma, the one Great
 Lord who stands transcendent far
 beyond this visioned World. This
 Lord of Māyā rules over Vishnu,
 Śiva and Brahmā. The Fully Living
 Soul shines alone in the expanse of Nothingness.
 He cannot be described in speech. He is neither
 Universe-filling large nor dwarf-like small. Know-
 ing him, all false appearances melt away. He stands
 in His real nature. Karma (Action) and Time affect
 Him not (touch Him not); He fills the Universe
 brimful. In him the mind of man lies merged,
 united with the Supreme-Life in full measure.
 Giver or receiver there is none. Automatically He
 gets into the Union of Identity. Myriad-fold bliss
 is born now; self and non-self vanishing now, He
 stands the sole Remainder. He is the Ever-risen
 Sun, the cause of rising and setting gone ! Akho
 relates this Joy of knowing Him. I offer praise to
 Him, who is Perfect Joy !”

Akho's grand
 poetic effusion
 combining emo-
 tion and imagin-
 ative vision.

In a distant but distinct manner these lines remind one of Wordsworth's well-known lines in his '*Excursion*' which may be quoted briefly here :

“Such was the Boy—but for the growing youth
 What soul was his when from the naked top
 Of some bold head-land he beheld the sun
 Rise up, and bathe the world in light! He looked
 Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth
 And ocean's liquid mass, in gladness lay
 Beneath him; far and wide the clouds were touched,
 And in their silent faces could be read
 Unutterable love. Sound needed none,
 Nor any voice of Joy, his spirit drank
 The spectacle: Sensation, Soul and Form
 All melted into him. x x x

 x x x x x

 x x x x

In such access of mind, in such high hour
 Of visitation from the living God
 Thought was not, in enjoyment it expired.”

Verily, in the above quoted description of his અભિનવ આનંદ we can picture Akho standing on the naked top of a bold head-land,—the headland of spiritual exaltation and witnessing beneath him the Ocean of Heavenly Light, wherein sensation, soul and form (જ્ઞાન, જ્ઞાતા and જ્ઞેય) all melt into him, when he needs not thought,—in enjoyment it expires.

I Have done. I hope I have presented before you some brilliant sparks from this Goldsmith's anvil; or, shall we call them flames from his furnace?



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